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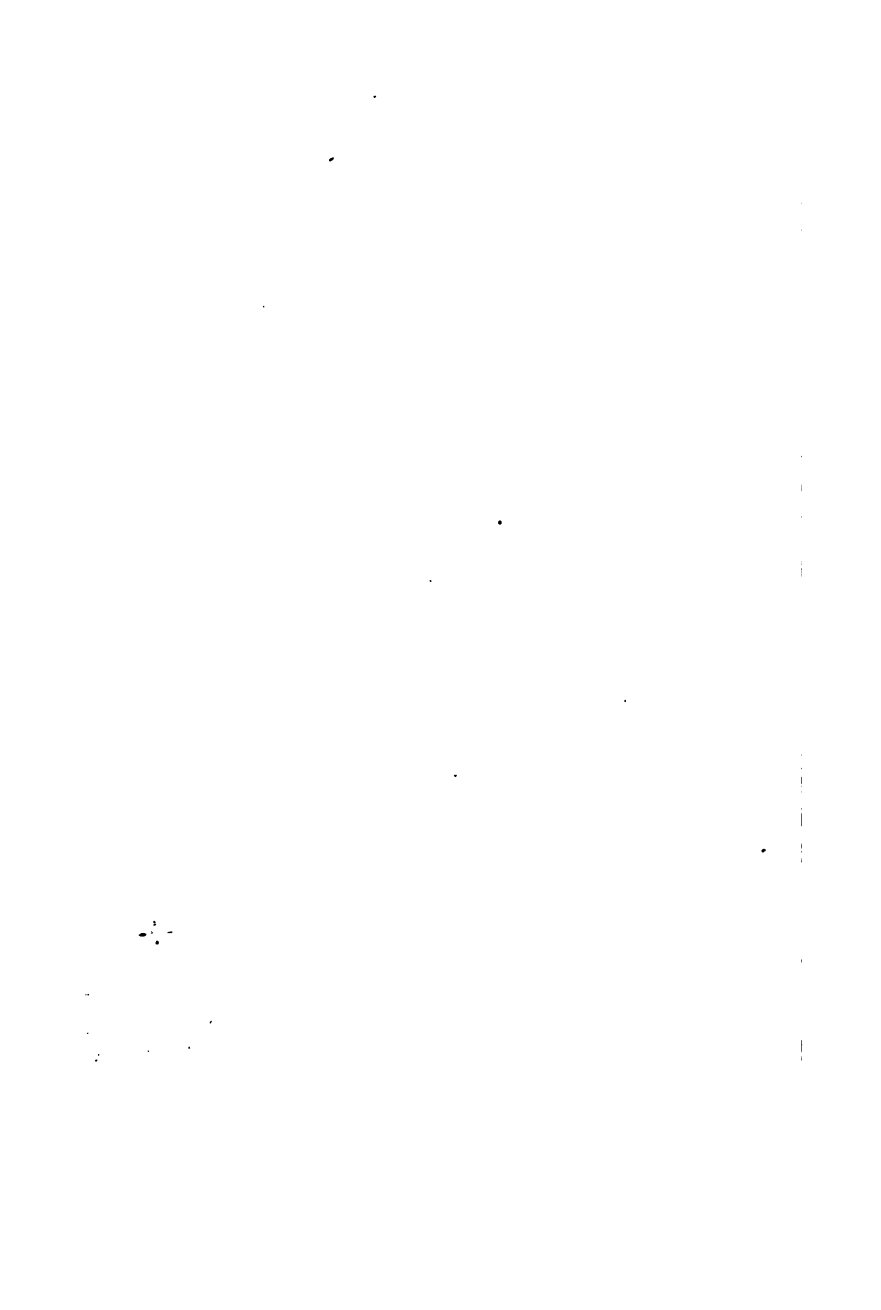


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FAMILY PORTRAITURE;
OR,
THE HISTORY
OF A
GERMAN COUNTRY PASTOR AND HIS FAMILY.



FAMILY PORTRAITURE;
OR,
THE HISTORY
OF
A GERMAN COUNTRY PASTOR,
AND HIS FAMILY.

ORIGINALLY

Translated from the German of Auguste La Fontaine,

BY

MADAME ISABELLE DE MONTHOLIEU,

Author of Caroline de Lichtfeld, A.D. 1802 ;

AND FREELY RENDERED FROM THE FRENCH,
BY MRS. J. D. WINGFIELD DIGBY.

LONDON :
ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE, AND CO.
BIRMINGHAM :
JOHN WHITEHOUSE SHOWELL, UPPER TEMPLE STREET.
DUBLIN :
J. ROBERTSON, GRAFTON STREET.

(1857.)

152 2 120



DEDICATED

TO HIM WITH WHOM I HAVE PASSED MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS
OF AS MUCH TRUE HAPPINESS
AS COMMONLY FALLS TO THE LOT OF MORTALS HERE BELOW.

THE LINES HAVE FALLEN TO US IN PLEASANT PLACES;
AND MAY WE DAILY LOOK FORWARDS TO THAT STILL BETTER LAND
FOR WHICH OUR PASSAGE THROUGH THIS WORLD
IS BUT THE PREPARATION.

Not for the summer hour alone,
When skies resplendent shine,
And youth and pleasure fill the throne,
Our hearts and hands we join ;
But for the stern and wintry days
Of sorrow, pain, and fear,
When heaven's wise discipline doth make
Our earthly journey drear.
Nor for this span of life alone,
Which like a blast doth fly,
And as the transient flower of grass
Must blossom, droop, and die ;
But for a being without end
The vows of love we take ;
Grant us, Oh Lord, one home at last,
For our Redeemer's sake.

SIGOURNEY.

INTRODUCTION.

Thirty-five years have passed away since I first met with the little work—a free translation of which I present to the public. Last year I accidentally fell in with my old favourite again, and confess I was as much charmed as when in my teens. Several passages of the original have been omitted, and some here and there altered or supplied; but I trust the interest of the original is not destroyed; and I only hope the Journal of the good Pastor may afford as much amusement to my readers as it has done to myself.

A. E. W. D.

The profits of this little work will be appropriated to aiding the funds for building Meenglass Church, in the County of Donegal.

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FAMILY PORTRAITURE.

CHAPTER I.

SKETCHES OF FAMILY HISTORY.

I have just completed my sixtieth year, but I am only now commencing to write my first book. No doubt it is rather late in the day to become an author, and especially as I shall not be able to lay claim to the merit of any laborious dissertation on the classics—or philosophical discourses on the nature of man—and the general depravity of manners—or researches in ancient geography. No doubt the composition of such valuable works has been the object of my ambition. And I have even actually more than once commenced to write them. Doubtless, also, the grand nature of these subjects would have been better suited to my age and experience than that which I am now bringing before the public. But I never could exactly make up my mind to which of these important subjects I ought to give the preference; and I began to fear, if I delayed much longer, I never should appear as an author at all, which has all my life long been the one great object of my ambition. Accordingly, for my own pleasure at least, if not for that of my readers, I will delay no longer; but, with a noble independence of the critics, I will at once launch forth my work. As long as I can remember anything I have held authors in the most profound respect and honour, and have always had an ardent desire to be distinguished as one. The circumstances which gave rise to this anxious wish I will at once relate.

My father was the pastor of a small village in the environs of Magdeburg. He was a most excellent, earnest, and sincere man. He never thought more of the lord of the manor or his agent, when delivering his discourses from his pulpit, than he did of the meanest peasant, but faithfully preached the truth to all alike. His uprightness, his austere manners, and serious deportment were so imposing that they won for him universal respect; and I, his only son, looked up to him as the most superior of human beings. I scarcely ever dared to speak in his presence. One day he came into my mother's apartment with an open letter in his hand, which he had just received from Magdeburg. I happened to be sitting with my mother, and was greatly struck with the look of pride and satisfaction which lighted up his expressive countenance. The letter was from a cousin, who invited him to his house to meet Gellert. He repeated over and over again, my dear, it is to meet Gellert, and then added, with a vivacity I had

never beheld in him before, I will take my son with me that he may hereafter be able to say that he has been in company with Gellert. He then went forth to take his usual walk in the village; he told the steward, the schoolmaster, and all whom he met, with an air of importance, that he was going to Magdeburg to dine with Gellert, as if this meeting must add immensely to his consideration. For some days there was no end to preparations for this intended visit, and on the appointed morning I entered the carriage with him. At every village on the road he called at the parsonage; and, after the first greeting, said, I am going to dine to-day with Gellert. He was invariably congratulated on his good fortune. His friends exclaiming, how fortunate! and, oh how I envy you! I was all the while quietly waiting for my father, not presuming to utter a word, but turning with curiosity to know who this wonderful Gellert could possibly be, and what he would be like, little dreaming that he was the author of the Fables which I had daily learned by heart, and which had become so familiar to me, that I actually fancied it could not be much more difficult to write them than I had found it to learn them. We arrived at last at our cousin's house, when everything betokened a state of preparation and excitement for the reception of Gellert. Our cousin, who was a jolly good natured old gentleman of very quiet habits in the general way, appeared to-day to be puffed up with a self-important air; he drawled out many words as if he were composing a speech, and paraded up and down his room as if he were treading the stage; he moved the chairs from one place to another; stood bolt upright, and, swinging his hand majestically, exclaimed, here we will place Gellert that all the guests may have a fair view of him. The guests, too, were quite different from those we usually met, not the friends and relations of the family, but the chief society of Magdeburg, even the deans, the greatest dignitaries of the church, whom I regarded as the ne plus ultra of all greatness, because my father honoured them as his superiors.

The most lovely young lady in the assembly had prepared a garland of flowers to present to Gellert as soon as he should arrive, and the moment his footsteps were heard in the ante-chamber a universal whisper of "he is come" resounded through the apartment. I quietly stole to the door that I might catch the first glimpse of him. My heart beat with violence, and I almost expected to hear him announced with a flourish of trumpets, or to behold a giant whose head would reach the ceiling; at any rate, that his coat would be embroidered with gold, or, like some great nobleman, he would be decorated with a diamond star and surrounded by his pages. When he was announced every one rose. I stood on tip toe, staring with all my might. I beheld a spare little man, dressed in a plain black suit, of most unpretending features and modest countenance; but every eye was turned

towards him, and all faces expressed the happiness his presence imparted. If he addressed himself to any one you immediately saw that countenance lighted up with proud satisfaction. The young lady brought forward her garland, and presented it with much timidity, uttering a speech she had prepared with a trembling voice. The men all surrounded him, and when he spoke you might have heard a fly move; even the deans, even my father, so grave and dignified before the lord of the village, listened with humility, presumed not to utter a word.

I could not stand it any longer, but taking my cousin's wife, with whom I was a great favourite, by the hand, I withdrew her to the antechamber, and asked who this wondrous man was. Do you not know, said she, that it is Gellert? But who is Gellert, said I, and why is he treated with so much honour? My dear, said she, are you not aware that he is the author of books which all the world admires? have you never read the fables of Gellert? To be sure I have, I replied, I know them all by heart. Well, then, do you know it was Gellert who composed them? He is a most wonderful genius, is Gellert; but come back quick, I would not lose a syllable of his conversation.

The impression of this day has never left my mind; I have always regarded it as the acmé of honour and happiness to be an author. From that moment it was the object of my ambition, and my hope, and my projects, for the future all were laid upon it; and yet, till this moment, I have never carried out my desires.

I have attained my sixtieth year and never printed one single page, though in imagination I have composed a whole library of the most valuable works. Whenever in the journals I have read of such or such a work being wanted in our literature, I ran to my study, prepared a thick packet of foolscap, wrote at the top in large letters the title of the work required. I then turned over my pages with an air of satisfaction, imagining them filled with my thoughts, and pleasing myself with the effect they would produce when printed. Every year I examined the catalogue of the different libraries at the great fair at Leipsic, and used to exclaim, like Alexander at the conquest of his father, they will leave me no subject to write upon; and yet, during all these years, I have hitherto accomplished nothing. I have still gone on hesitating upon what important topic I should commence, and what between the anxious desire to obtain celebrity, and the fear that I should not be successful, days, months, and years have passed away, and perhaps would have continued to do so had not my wife given a spur to my amour propre which has at last taken effect.

A friend, whom several unfortunate circumstances had contributed to ruin, was one day deploring with us his unhappy fate, and mourning over the loss of that which he had laid by for the solace of his old age. That is much the case with all of us, said my wife, our projects and hopes all end in disappoint-

ment, and all our plans seem to vanish away like smoke; in short, such is life. Oh no, said my poor friend, these things do not happen generally, I am but a sad exception. You are quite mistaken, replied my wife; why there is my dear husband, full six and thirty years ago he began to talk to me of a book he intended to publish, this book was the one great desire of his heart; but he has never written it, and he never will. This little speech of my wife struck me. I had never heard her say anything like it before. She would certainly smile when I read to her the different titles of my works, and told her I was about to occupy myself with some great subject; but this time her assertion was so positive that I felt piqued, and resolved to prove to her that she was mistaken. I shut myself up in my study, determined not to leave it till I had at least commenced something of weight and importance. I looked over all my different sheets of foolscap, so neatly prepared, with their titles all written in my most imposing hand, and I again became bewildered; doubts and indecision again took hold upon me. I balanced for some time between which of the interesting and learned dissertations I should commence, and weeks and months slipped by without my feeling myself able to give the preference. At length a very trivial circumstance had the effect of inducing me to lay them all aside, and give the public a work of an entirely different nature. It will not be a heavy commentary, or a theological discourse, but a sort of picture in mosaic, inserted, so to speak, bit by bit, during the space of many years, comprehending many events, and tracing out great variety of feeling. My little granddaughter, Charlotte, then only fourteen years of age, was the innocent cause of my change of purpose. I will briefly relate the circumstances which led to it.

My deep respect for the character of an author extended itself even to the very materials employed in writing. It made me quite angry to see paper wasted. I always thought of the fine ideas with which I might have covered it; and I was quite annoyed to see my wife employ it for her domestic purposes. The only quarrels we ever had were actually upon this subject. The first years of our married life we always made two journeys to the city, and before starting I invariably laid in a good supply of common waste paper, which I entreated her to make use of for her parcels and packing, but nothing would induce her to do so. She, who was always so gentle and complaisant on every other subject, on this point was incorrigible. She had a brother, a paper manufacturer, and he supplied us ad libitum, so that she invariably declared, and with some appearance of reason, that it was more economical to use the nice white paper which he sent to us for nothing, than the soiled old journals which I purchased. But I, who was always dwelling upon the valuable compositions I had in my head, thought that the whole manufactory of my rother-in-law would hardly suffice for them, and I was ever

wanting to lay by what he sent to us, so that when I beheld this coveted treasure cut up to lay under patty pans, or enveloping some cumbersome parcel, I was quite put out by it.

When all our children were dispersed, and consequently our journeys became more frequent, the need of packing paper was, of course, equally so. I rejoiced when I received the catalogues of the fair, which each year became more voluminous, thinking that my wife would now have no excuse for not using these advertising sheets. I took an interest in making a kind of ingenious arrangement of them for her, for the various objects to which they might be applied. Only think, said I, how charming for you to wrap up your tooth powders in this advertisement of medicines, and your false curls in this philosophical treatise, your scissors and knife in this history of the French Revolution, your embroidery you may fold up in these large sheets of metaphysical lectures, so appropriate for those delicate colours with which you cover over your canvass, in those elaborate patterns which it seems impossible to understand; how appropriate would these notices of the new romance be for fans, your ribbons, your gauzes, and fashionable trimmings, which last but for a day; and here are some old journals in which you may put your loose articles or any little thing you may have previously forgotten. I read her out passages to show her how appropriate the selection I had made was. She listened patiently for a moment or two, and then, moving towards the drawer where her writing paper was kept, said, my dear it would be a great pity to tear up that which has been already printed. I had nothing to say in answer to this, but determined to lock up still more carefully my own stores, and wait till the favourable moment came for bringing them unto use.

Some months before the sixtieth anniversary of my birth I missed every two or three days a sheet of paper, then one was taken every day, and at last it came to two a day, in fact, the matter was really serious—who could I accuse of this robbery? My wife had for some time been settled at home, and only using writing paper for her accounts or her lists of linen, &c., &c, and this paper I had myself most carefully given out to her. No one else entered my study except an old maid servant and my little granddaughter, Lolotte. The old servant being fully aware of my particularities was equally careful, and would even bring me the very smallest piece of writing paper that she found lying about. And what could Lolotte possibly want with it? I had always given her some of my old printed papers to wrap up her play things in; and yet, after all, Lolotte was the culprit.

I had one morning counted over the sheets of paper I had remaining, after finishing my sermon, and found one gone. The very same evening I missed another. I lay in wait and caught Miss Lolotte in the fact. Ah, ah, said I, seizing hold upon her,

with the prize in her hand, I have caught you at last, it is you who have stolen all my beautiful paper, is it? Now tell me, madam, what have you done with it? four quires in less than three months!—in what way can you have employed it? and, contrary to my usual custom, I assumed a very serious and angry air. The little thief, completely startled, knew not what to say, she stammered out some excuses, and these so very extraordinary, that I did not know what to make of them, and got still more annoyed with her. I fear you are adding falsehood to theft, said I; tell me directly what you are going to do with my paper; if it had been to write upon I might forgive you. Well, dear grandpapa, said she, forgive me at once, for indeed it was for nothing else. To write upon, said I smiling, why what in the world can you want to write, a list of your doll's clothes? I happened at this moment to perceive the little fingers of the hand I still held covered with ink. I let it drop, and patting her on the cheek, said, well, dear child, I see you have been writing, but what can you have written to take up four quires of paper? why it is enough to make a book. My caress gave her courage. Grandpapa, said she, with infantine simplicity, I have been writing a journal. And whose journal, may I ask? My own journal, grandpapa. I could not help smiling at the air of importance with which the child spoke of her journal. And pray Lolotte, said I, what are the important affairs you have written in your journal? Why grandpapa, a great many things occur every day in one's life. What, Lolotte, in a life of fourteen years? I cannot conceive many very important events having occurred to you, at any rate not sufficient to have filled up four whole quires of paper. That is the way people always talk of the things which do not concern themselves, said she, but every one knows how to appreciate that which does interest them. Well, child, you are right enough there, said I; but come let me look at your journal. The poor child, covered with blushes, excused herself in the most pathetic manner, and assured me it was not worth the trouble of reading; she also implored me with great earnestness not to tell her grandmama, and ran away, after I had given her an inferior kind of paper on which to continue her journal, for I felt rather pleased to discover in her so early a taste for writing. I confess my curiosity was strongly excited to get a sight of her journal, and as young ladies of fourteen are not very prudent or careful, I soon had an opportunity of gratifying my curiosity. Let any one imagine my astonishment when I discovered that this little miss-in-her-teens was actually fancying herself in love with her cousin Charles, one of my grandsons, named after me, and her journal was neither more nor less than the history of this imaginary passion. Her tears, her sighs, her sleepless nights, the quarrels between them, their jealousies, their eternal constancy, &c. I hardly knew whether to feel most angry or grieved at the discovery, and yet I confess I was really much interested. I called

the child to me, and said to her in a tone of displeasure, Lolotte, I have read your journal. O, dear grandpapa, what do you tell me? exclaimed she, bursting into tears, but quickly recovering herself, and putting on a winning, coaxing way, she laid her finger upon my lips, and said, dear grandpapa you will not betray me, you will not tell my grandmother, will you? Not tell your grandmama, Lolotte, what can you be thinking of—and what a silly child you are to talk about love—you who ought to be playing with your doll? Her colour quickly rose again, but it was with pure vexation. I have left off playing with my doll for ages, grandpapa, and I am not such a child after all. I am more than fourteen, and my Charles is seventeen, and he is such a perfect gentleman. But, oh dear grandpapa, I am so very unhappy!—since you already know so much I will tell you all.

Charles believes I have been fickle towards him, and oh, dear grandfather, I am afraid I really have given him reason to be jealous. This really was a little too much. What, Lolotte, said I, you pretend to talk of being fickle, who are only fourteen years of age? But, dear grandpapa, I really do love Charles better than any one in the world; you will bring about a reconciliation between us, will you not, grandpapa. A reconciliation! I really hardly knew what to say or how to take her, the idea was so utterly absurd, that I, a grandfather, and a grave minister, should have been thus drawn in to be the confidant of two such baby lovers. I felt half inclined to laugh, and yet was really seriously displeased. I did not know whether to treat the matter as childish folly or a grave offence. When I listened to the ridiculous speeches of Lolotte, I was angry; when I witnessed her tears and sobs, I was touched; when I looked at her infantine appearance, I was ready to laugh. I ended by giving her a serious lecture, endeavouring to impress upon her the impropriety of her conduct; but she overwhelmed me with arguments, and talked about the deep feelings of her heart, which certainly did seem to be very considerably older than her head; the more she disputed, the more needful I felt it was to assume the tone of parental displeasure; but though I at last became quite severe I could not convince her she was wrong. She repeated, she could not help loving her cousin, and at last completely silenced me by saying, her mother was only a year older when she first became attached to her father. It was indeed most true, and a deep sigh fell from me when I recalled all the distress and trouble this premature attachment had occasioned us. Lolotte quickly perceived the effect that this recollection had upon me, and renewed her entreaties, that I would not tell any one, but especially her grandmother, of her engagement. At last, to get rid of her, I consented, but I could not make up my mind whether I should treat her as a mere silly child or as a young person who required careful and constant watching. I was determined, however, to say nothing at present

to my wife, for I knew that her ideas were most strict and severe, and that she would have considered it an unpardonable crime to fall in love before the age of eighteen, at the very least. I was twenty when you first thought of me, she used to say, and I consider it an unpardonable crime and a shame for any young girl to give away her heart till her reason is quite matured. Doubtless you are right, dear wife. I had often argued with her, but sometimes the feelings of the heart are more advanced than the faculties of the mind. However, said she, it would be a crime and a shame to admit it. Nature sometimes gives a different verdict, I would say. Nature is the very guide we ought to follow, she would again urge, for behold the instinct of the animal creation, when did you ever see the birds attempt to pair before they were fully fledged, and their nests ready to build? But, dear wife, the nests of men take a long while in preparing. Many, alas, never have any nest at all, and yet their hearts are no less susceptible of strong attachments. Some, like birds of passage, quit the world before their little ones are half fledged, and leave them without guide or support. Heaven take pity on all such, said my wife, much moved, but again I say it is a crime and a shame to marry too young. With such feelings I dared not betray Lolotte to her grandmother; but I resolved to watch over her with more than maternal care.

The child's journal forcibly recalled to my recollection one I had myself commenced at the time of my marriage, and carried on for some time, though I long laid it aside and almost forgotten it. I immediately searched for and found it at the bottom of a drawer. I read it over and was struck with the alteration in my feelings and sentiments since I had written it. This caused me to reflect much on the variety of circumstances which affect the human mind during the course of a long life. And why, said I, should not a map of the human heart make quite as interesting a study as a map of foreign countries; a voyage into the interior of the mind of man is surely as interesting as a journey of discovery into unknown regions, or a voyage across the sea to distant lands. It has its storms, its tempests, its rocks, its shipwrecks, its favourable gales, and its soft and peaceful navigation; the miracles the human heart is capable of performing, the noble actions it may be worked up to, under the influence of virtuous sentiments, surely would possess as much interest for one's fellow creatures as any learned philosophical commentaries; and why should not the life of a faithful country pastor and his family, their feelings, their pride, their follies, their spirit of domination; surely these things are all pictures of human life, though it may not have been the proud Roman who had experienced them, the only difference is, that, in one case they have ranged half the world, and caused torrents of blood to be spilt; and, in the other, our tears have been shed under the

humble roof of a cottage. The gentleness, patience, and amiability of those dear children, the sacrifices they have made to their duty without ostentation, and without vanity, are really quite as much virtues, though the theatre they were performed in was but a cabin. And even the love of Charles and Lolotte, the ingenuous confidence of this poor little girl, is as much interest to me and my friends as the first love of a young prince would be to the heart of his father. Most true, said a little voice at the door of my study, Oh, dear grandpapa, I am so glad you are so much kinder than most old people who are always making game of the young, and treating their feelings with contempt, because they happen to be just a few years older than we are, and as if we should not be one day as experienced as they. I turned my head quietly round and beheld Lolotte; what are you doing there Miss Curiosity, said I, begone directly. Oh, dear grandpapa, is that you who were so very kind but a moment ago? Child, what you heard me say was only the commencement of a book; if I were talking to you it would be quite another thing. Oh, my goodness, grandpapa, you surely would not like to appear more amiable in your book than you are in reality. I could not answer her. She spoke but the truth.

How very rare it is to behold a man exactly like what he would wish to describe himself in a book. How often do authors say the very reverse of what they do and think, and contradict by their actions the noble sentiments they have written. I have known poets, whose verses breathe nothing but tenderness and gentleness, with the most sublime sentiments, render their wives wretched by their evil tempers and their harshness. No, my little Lolotte, I exclaimed, no, I will never have to reproach myself with being more amiable on paper than in the bosom of my family. If anything vexes me I will let my angry feelings expend themselves and evaporate with my pen and ink, but I will always be indulgent to the failings of my beloved ones, and I will make excuses for their weakness. Lolotte looked up in my face with astonishment, and, taking my hand, said, after a moment's hesitation, dear grandpapa, you will let me write all this to my Charles? How excessively silly you are with your Charles; do, Lolotte, have done with this absurdity. Grandpapa will you write that in your book? you did not speak thus when I first came in. Yes, said I, impetuously, I will, most certainly, you impertinent little Miss, and you shall see it yourself in print, word for word. Well, well, I have kept my word, but I do feel myself obliged to confess, even if the saucy Lolotte should one day read it, that what she said was but too true, for man always will strive to appear more amiable in print than in reality; and, after all, perhaps it is only natural, and it is really the duty of an author to do this, for he writes for the instruction of his fellow creatures, and rather points out to them what they should be, than what they are.

CHAPTER II.

THE WINDOW AND THE SIGNAL.

Good heavens ! how rapidly time does pass, exclaimed I, one day, after dreamily perusing some old pages of my journal, and how different the present times are to those that are gone ! I laid down my book and dwelt in imagination on those bye-gone days. I could hardly realise to myself that I was the person who had written the passages I had been perusing. I sought to retrace the feelings I then experienced. One recollection brought back another—one circumstance recalled others ; by degrees light seemed to break in upon me, and the picture of my youthful days was vividly fresh before me, both on my memory and my heart. My wife and Lolotte had gone into a neighbouring field to watch the growth of their flax. My chest heaved, my heart palpitated, I threw open my window in order to breathe more freely. The view that met my eyes struck a chord that vibrated still more tenderly on my affections. On one side was the venerable church in which I had for so many years addressed myself to my beloved flock, and offered up my prayers and my thanksgivings to the Almighty ; on the other side were cottages, inhabited by my kind and simple-hearted parishioners, who had so long looked up to me as their guide and their friend. It was a working day ; no idlers were to be seen about the streets ; but from the surrounding fields I heard on all sides the sounds of workmen's tools, and the cheerful song and merry laugh. In the distance, almost concealed by the wood, was another village, hardly distinguishable by the naked eye, I took up my spy-glass, turned it in the proper direction, and soon discovered the red tiles of the Parsonage, which had been the home of my beloved wife, and from the window, in the roof of which she used to make signals to me with her pocket handkerchief, which I used to return in a similar manner, wafting her a thousand kisses at the same time. Six and thirty years of my life seemed in one moment to have vanished away, and I seemed suddenly to have returned to the moment in which the sight of that white handkerchief used to make my heart beat with so much pleasure. I actually fancied I beheld my Augusta with the same noble mien and elegant form she then possessed, her lovely blond hair and sweet blue eyes, so full of gentleness and expression, her fair fresh complexion, her singing harmonious voice. Oh, my Augusta, my beloved Augusta, cried I, in deep emotion ! I was startled by a gentle pinch on my shoulder, and a cracked voice behind me saying—dearest husband, did you want me ; here I am. My dream vanished at once, and I was quite unable to speak. We are just come back from the flax field, said my wife. I looked at her in her thick warm

woollen dress, which comfortably enveloped her stout and somewhat bent form, and was quite appropriate for a grandmother! Her dowdy bonnet almost covered her hair, though one or two stray locks betrayed its silvery whiteness, and did not conceal the wrinkles, caused by care and time, on her forehead. But I felt she was still the same beloved Augusta; though her eyes were less brilliant they always met mine with the same tenderness; though her lips had nearly lost their colour, they had not forgotten to pronounce words of kindness and tender endearment. The illusion no doubt was dissolved, but a sweet and gentle emotion still remained. What were you watching with such intense earnestness when we came in, said she, was it the workmen? I was looking—but stop, my Augusta, said I, putting the spy-glass into her hands, look yourself, and I turned the glass for her in the proper direction. She looked for a moment, and then turning towards me with a bewildered air, said, I can see nothing but the red tiles of Hazelrode Parsonage;—and the window, sweet Augusta? That window, from which you used to wave your handkerchief as a signal for me to meet you; that window from which you used to watch me flying on the wings of joy and love, whilst you were calculating the exact moment to descend and meet me. She smiled, but quietly replied—what is the use of thinking of these things, dear husband? these days of our folly are long gone by. We have other things to occupy ourselves with now; for instance, our flax is growing beautifully, we shall have a splendid harvest. She then put on her spectacles and sat down to her knitting as comfortably as possible. Her cool reasoning did that which her sudden appearance before me failed to accomplish, for it restored to me my six and thirty years. I closed my window, returned to my arm chair, and silently drew a comparison between the lovely and sensitive Augusta, of the old Parsonage at Hazelrode, and the excellent calm grandmother, who was seated before me. I asked myself if it was possible she could be the same person. I looked at her. She also was silent, and with the end of her knitting kneedle was tracing figures without meaning upon the table, when suddenly she looked up and said, what were you thinking of, dear husband? Was it of me? I was very wrong to call that remembrance a folly. Had you forgotten those days—did you not still love me as you did then, you would never have these thoughts. She held out her hand to me, I pressed it with the same tender emotion I had felt in the days of my youth. Yes, said I, you are my Augusta, you always were, and you always shall be the same whom I loved of yore, and always shall love above all the world besides. Yes, I love you, still better now than I loved you then! No, my dear wife, my emotion is not folly. I pity those who after six and thirty years of union and happiness could see without emotion the window from which they used to watch for the signal of the beloved one. She fell upon my neck,

and we together shed tears of tender recollection and grateful happiness. She then left me, and I sat down to my desk fully determined to retrace all the scenes of my youth.

CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG PREACHER.

Never was there perhaps any young man more desolate or destitute of friends than I was at twenty-three years of age. I had just left the University after my ordination. My father had been sometime dead, and my mother did not long survive him. They had come as strangers to Magdeburg, and had no relations in the neighbourhood except the good fat cousin before spoken of. He had most kindly exerted himself in my absence to collect together my small patrimony; small indeed, for after paying all my father's debts, and selling his personal property, fifty crowns was all that remained to me; and three weeks after the good man himself died suddenly. Having no longer any ties at Magdeburg, and feeling the necessity of doing something for myself before my fifty crowns were all expended, the office of a pastor seemed the most suited to my tastes, and promised me a life of peace and happiness; but even that required patronage. Every one that I applied to, told me I was too young for the charge of souls. At last I resolved to return to the University and live there with the strictest economy, whilst I pursued my studies in the hope of acquiring by my good conduct and by my reputation for learning sufficient confidence and experience to do away the impression of my youth. I accordingly hired a small chamber from an ironmonger, a very excellent person, who was possessed of some degree of talent, and who soon felt for me the affection of a parent. We had no other lodger, and as, during my former residence at the University, I had by my father's desire avoided making any acquaintances, and my own inclination also led me to dislike company, I gave myself up entirely to study, and diligently attended all the lectures, so that I really was tolerably well informed for my age; but the science on which I most piqued myself was, my deep study of human nature. By comparing one century with another, and reflecting deeply on all I read, I conceived I had actually, in the recesses of my closet, attained the art of divining the secret motives of men's actions, and the natural consequences which must follow upon the uncontrolled indulgence of the passions. My mode of reasoning was always perfect in speculation, but still I know not how it happened, but after tracing my consequences in the most luminous manner the event scarcely ever turned out as I expected.

Far from being disheartened by my frequent failures, I always attributed them to some unforeseen circumstance, and used to say, well, it certainly ought to have been so, and I recommenced my study of man with more eagerness than ever, from my books and from my imagination, so different from the men of every-day life. But, alas! nothing could be less remunerative than this study. My fifty crowns rapidly dwindled away, and I began to wish I could find some man willing to help me to a living, and that it would be a far better thing than giving up all my time to the study of mankind in general. At least I thought it must be useful to me to have attained this knowledge whenever I shall be lucky enough to be brought before the notice of those capable of patronising me. At last I called upon the Rector, whose office it was to select the candidates, and determined to present myself before him with that noble assurance and self-respect which would be sure to speak in my favour. I felt quite persuaded that the first words he addressed to me would give me sufficient insight into his character to enable me to frame my conduct accordingly. If he was vain, I determined I would flatter him; if I found him haughty, I would be humble; if sensitive, I would work on his feelings; if learned, I would consult with him; if ignorant, I would kindly assist him; in short, I felt what a very happy thing it was for me that I had made human nature so thoroughly my study. I felt in the highest spirits, and made no doubt whatever of obtaining a most favourable reception; but having been kept for some time waiting in the ante-room, my courage rather began to diminish, and every thing I saw combined still more to shake my nerves. The footmen in their smart liveries made me look down upon my rather shabby black garments with a feeling of inferiority, and when the folding-doors were thrown open, and a richly-furnished apartment presented itself before me, I gazed with awe upon the Rector, who was standing before a table and immediately addressed me, doubtless to learn my business. I was so bewildered I could not utter one word of the address which I had prepared with so much care; nor could I catch from him any of the important words which were at once to have let me into his character. At length I stammered out something about the care of a parish, about my course of study, my circumstances, &c. &c. The Rector coldly remarked that I looked very young, and could have very little experience, pointed out the advantage of further study, and told me there were many candidates much my seniors, who were upon his lists still seeking employment, and that all his curacies were promised. I had nothing to reply in answer to these objections, nor had my study of human nature prepared me for them. Accordingly I was bowed out of the room, and carried not with me a ray of hope. I certainly do know human nature, said I to myself, but I was deceived as to myself. I never

was made to act the part of a humble petitioner, it is too degrading. I will adopt a more honourable course, and owe my success entirely to my own exertions, neither seeking favour or patronage from any one.

Full of this honourable ambition I returned to my good friend the ironmonger; he gently hinted to me that till my talents could be fully appreciated I must do something to obtain a livelihood, and suggested my taking pupils, whom he kindly procured for me amongst his customers. I instructed them in history and the dead languages, and obtained a sufficient pittance to supply my moderate demands. But my ardent desire to obtain a parish continued to increase, and at last I consulted my landlord as to what I had better do. He advised me to publish some sermons, and to offer to preach for the dignitaries of the university; the idea appeared excellent, and I set to work with great earnestness: and feeling that I should now be called upon to address a large and important congregation, I felt convinced that my study of human nature would be of the most important service to me. I determined on producing a very grand effect, and astonishing my auditory,—I resolved, therefore, to adopt a tone of great severity and give a most animated picture of the ruling vices of the age. Accordingly, I thundered forth denunciations against the depravity of manners, and really persuaded myself that some of the passages were sublime. Having no one else to consult, I read my discourse to my host. When I had ended my declamation with prodigious vehemence and emphasis, the ironmonger said with a low bow, it is exceedingly fine, Mr. Bemrode, but I really did not know you were so wicked, or so very harsh and severe. I am neither wicked, nor am I severe, my good friend, said I; I speak of mankind in general, and I am certainly well acquainted with the vices of the times. But my good sir, said he, with a grave shake of the head, your audience will not be very apt to consider you as an exception to the mass of sinners you have so well described, but doubtless you know best; and I hope you will prove a successful reformer. On returning to my chamber I reflected on what my host had said, and was alarmed. What right had I, younger by far than any whom I was to address, to overwhelm them with the weight of my animadversions, to reproach them with their vices, hurl down upon them the threatened vengeance of the Almighty. What was to prevent them from judging me in their turn? My profound knowledge of human nature would be but a poor excuse for me. It was too late to attempt to write another sermon, for I was to preach on the following morning, so I spent the whole night in making corrections and softening down the most violent paragraphs, or reciting them aloud that I might fix on my memory the changes I had made.

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to be able the sooner to make my escape, and slunk away to hide my shame and mortification. My good landlord had already returned, and looked anything but pleased at me. "Why," said he, "did you speak so quick and so low? No one could hear a word." "Thank God," said I, tearing up my sermon, and I immediately resolved that my study of human nature should never again lead me into such a scrape. I thought I never should again have courage to show my face in public, and almost expected to be hooted in the streets; but after a few days I stealthily crept from my lodgings, and saw that no one took any notice of me, so that I hoped my sermon was forgotten; by degrees I recovered from my mortification, and resumed my labours with my pupils.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WIDOW.

After some considerable time I was one day surprised by receiving from the Rector, whose patronage I had so unsuccessfully solicited, a summons to call upon him. I went, and he told me that ever since my visit he had constantly kept his eye upon me, and that my patience, my good conduct, and my talents were well deserving of some reward, that the cure of the village of Eizebach being vacant he had canvassed the patrons for me, and that I had nothing to do but sign a petition which he himself had prepared, and present myself as a candidate for the living. Three days afterwards I received a summons to come forward with another competitor and bring with me my trial sermon. I was in great delight, as may be supposed, returned my hearty thanks to my kind friend, and made a full entry of his unexpected generosity in my journal, which I had for some time been in the habit of keeping, in order that I might always note down my comments upon human nature. My experience had generally heretofore led me to attribute motives of self-interest or vanity as the common incentive to any action; but in this instance I puzzled my head in vain to discover what could have attracted toward me the unexpected and kind interest of the Rector. I never had paid any court to him, I never had heard that he had a daughter, or a niece to provide for; and certainly I knew he could expect nothing from me. I puzzled my brains for some time, and at last I felt quite convinced that nothing but my own merits could have attracted him towards me, and I modestly satisfied myself with this conclusion, and rejoiced to have become acquainted with one of those rare and excellent persons who make it their pleasure and happiness to seek out and reward the humble and deserving. With the entire energies of my whole heart I set to

work upon my sermon, and resolved to bring forward my knowledge of human nature to edify and admonish the inhabitants of Eizebach; but I was rather puzzled how to adopt the proper medium, fearing that if I took too high a strain, the simple peasants would not comprehend me, and if I gave them too simple a sermon, they might be apt to fancy they could have done as well themselves. I accordingly thought I would adopt a middle course, and that I would put forth the plainest truths with an imposing tone and commanding manner. Satisfied with this decision I read my discourse to my host, who listened with great attention, and said, "no doubt it is very fine, Mr. Bemrode, but it appears to me that your sermon is like an old stuff coat with fine laced trimmings, or old trimmings put upon a fine new coat." "You have just hit upon it," said I, shaking him by the hand, "that was the very effect I wished to produce," and I told him the motives which actuated me. He shook his head, and said, "I would not presume to dictate to you, Mr. Bemrode, but in my humble judgment your plan will not answer." I laughed, and persisted. The longed-for Saturday at last arrived. A miserable little covered carriage, driven by a good sturdy countryman, was sent for me. I got into it with an exulting heart, with my sermon in my hand, that I might study it on my journey. After an hour's drive, my coachman turned round, and, pointing with his whip towards the village on the right-hand side, said, that is Eizebach. I quickly raised my head and gazed with interest on the spot which I hoped might be my future home; the theatre of all the joys and pleasures of my future life; the place where my ashes might repose in peace.

The village appeared to me pleasantly situated, commanding a considerable extent of country. A beautiful wood of elm and limes half concealed it from my view. Their foliage appeared to me the most luxuriant I had ever seen, and the air the softest and the most agreeable I had ever breathed. At one end of the village was a large modern mansion, belonging to Count Rangard, the lord of the soil: but he does not reside here, said my guide. I was glad of this, and my whole attention was directed to the other end of the village, where I beheld the church and the parsonage. A sweet voice within me, which I looked upon as a happy omen, seemed to say, this is thy home. We then passed a little mound, where some half-naked children were gamboling on the grass. My heart at once adopted these little ones, and in passing I gave them my paternal blessing. We then drove by a line of houses, which formed the principal street. Oh, thought I, how many hearts are beating now in the cottages with joy, and some with care and sorrow. If I should be appointed their pastor I will be their guide and their friend. I will teach them to earn happiness by their good conduct, and to bear their disappointments in a spirit of pious resignation. How I shall delight to be

the happy means of uniting hands and hearts together, to bring their little ones into the church of Christ, to instruct their youth, to close the eyes of the aged, and to console the sufferers. And who, said I to myself, getting more and more moved with the train of my thoughts, who knows what need I myself may have of consolation, or what trials may attend me in this asylum which I have so ardently longed for. An almost choking sensation overpowered me. I burst into tears. The villagers were standing before their doors. I was fearful they would see my emotion, and I leaned back in my carriage. It is not thus I will hide my tears hereafter, thought I, when I come to dwell amongst you. We will then weep together or share our joys together. I pity those who, under similar circumstances, could pass through this street unmoved. I pity any one who could coldly address himself to such parishioners. In uttering these sentiments, half aloud to myself, I felt my cheeks burn with shame and confusion as I thought of the sermon I had brought with me, and which I actually held in my hand, and which, during the greater part of my journey, I had been perusing with infinite satisfaction. I now felt that there was not a sentence in it which I would wish to utter before them; that in composing it I had thought of myself only, and of the impression which I should make with my false eloquence. Filled with indignation against myself I tore my manuscript in half, and vehemently exclaimed, no, if I had not a word to utter, I will at least never play false to you. I will not act the part of an imposter; you shall never hear such a sermon as this from me. To this hour I have kept the fragments of my discourse, and I never behold them without a feeling of shame, but mingled with satisfaction and self-congratulation.

The carriage soon stopped at the Vicarage, which was still occupied by the widow of the late Incumbent, an aged woman whose pale face and calm resigned countenance interested me greatly: she kindly welcomed me and wished me success in my trial; she then showed me round the garden, the circuit of which, as well as the house, she said was small; but added, "you will find you may be very happy here, and there are other advantages connected with the living which add much to its value. I lived here for six and forty years with my husband, and never wished to change." "Six and forty years!" repeated I; "Ah, madam, you must grieve much to leave a house so long endeared to you." "No," said she, in a quiet and melancholy tone, which betrayed an indifference to all outward circumstances; "No, my dear sir, it is quite indifferent to me where I may spend the small remnant of my life." She led me into a room on the ground floor, which had been the usual sitting room of the family. "You will doubtless bring a companion with you," said she; "and may you live as long and be as happy as we were; for six and forty years our happiness was complete." "What!" said I, rising quickly, and joining my hands together, "you really enjoyed uninterrupted happiness for six and

forty years; why, it appears almost miraculous! Surely you are a single exception to the common lot of mortals! With what deep interest do I enter a house whose walls have never resounded to the voice of weeping and lamentation," I said. "Not that," replied the widow, with the same calm manner, but in a voice which became rather tremulous, "I meant to say that during six and forty years nothing had ever disturbed the tenderness of our union. Nothing should really render us unhappy but that which is produced by our own faults. For instance, when our peace of mind is interrupted; or when we do not bear with submission whatever the Almighty sees fit to bring upon us—for his visitations are sent to purify and to prove us—they are designed for our welfare, and we ought to be able to look upon them as good for us, even though at first they may tear our hearts with grief till we submit ourselves into his hands. In this very chamber," said she, her voice trembling still more, and tears coursing each other down her faded cheeks, "in this very chamber I lost five lovely children in the small pox. In the commencement of the week I sat here the proud mother of five beloved ones, and at the end of the week I was no longer a mother. In this corner," said she, pointing with her finger, "I watched the expiring breath of the eldest, lovely and beautiful as a spring morning, only just eighteen, and a bride. But, my dear young minister, she is happy, she will never have to weep for the loss of her children, or know what it is to outlive the dear partner of her heart. But I, once a mother and a wife, am now alone in the world. I have survived all I held dear,—but it is the will of my heavenly Father, and I know that he is good! it cannot be for long!" and she looked up to heaven with an expression of pious confidence, and her tears ceased. She seemed rapt, and as it were reunited to her husband and children. It is impossible to express the effect her narrative had upon me, and the earnest grief, but humble resignation, her countenance expressed. An involuntary emotion made me seize her hand, and pressing it with respectful tenderness, I said, "No, dear madam, you are not alone in the world; you must look upon me as a son, who will anxiously devote his whole life to you, and strive to render your old age happy. Oh, be to me a mother—a mother, respected and beloved. I, like you, have lost all that belonged to me; I also am alone in the world; but suffer me to be so no longer. Do you be my mother, and let me be your son. Remain here with me, if the Almighty should be pleased to permit me to come here, and instruct me in those things which I earnestly desire to learn. If ever sorrow and trouble befall me, I will come into this chamber, where you resigned your five children to the Almighty, and will learn to suffer without a murmur." The excellent woman gazed at me, and listened with an air so surprised and touched, that, overpowered by her feelings, she shed a torrent of tears. "A thousand blessings rest upon you, dear

young man," said she: "I will live with you, and fill to you the place of your mother: whether here, or wherever you may go, I will never quit you. You shall close my eyes, and the little I possess shall be yours." We remained silent for some moments; I still knelt before her, and her venerable hand was placed upon my head. At last she said, "how little did I expect to find a son in you, whose coming I so much dreaded." I looked at her in surprise, and said, "why, dear mother, should you have dreaded my coming?—surely no one could have told you anything against me." "Yes," said she, "the gentleman who gave you your nomination. Do you not know why he wished you to stand?" "No," said I, "I have in vain puzzled myself to find out; I can think of no other reason but his own kindness, and my reputation, perhaps." "Oh, you are quite mistaken," said the widow; "he has a near relation whom he is very desirous of placing here; but he is a man of no talent whatever, and therefore he named you for fear that some more gifted person might be brought forward, and so take away all chance for his relation; because,—because,"—said she, hesitating. "Because what, dear mother?" said I; "fear not to tell me; am I not your son? and a mother should hide nothing from her child; but I will help you: it is because I have even less talent than the rector's relation." "That is just what he thought," said the widow; "but I am sure that he was deceived, and that he was also wrong in every thing else that he told us about you; for he has been spreading it about that you would be a very bad pastor, harsh, severe, and negligent; and that as for preaching, you had never attempted but one sermon. and that was so confused and ill-delivered that no one could make anything out of it: he has industriously circulated this throughout the village, and I much fear you will be rejected." "Fear not, mother," said I, taking her hand, and raising my eyes to heaven; "fear not; my brothers and sisters, who are gone up there, will be my guardian angels, and will protect the son of their dear mother." She pressed her hand to her heart, and said, "dear son, have you your sermon with you?—could you not read it to me?" I found her my torn manuscript, and with a smile related to her the history of my former unfortunate discourse, and the feelings which had prompted me to destroy the one I held in my hand. She smiled, and said, "at any rate let me hear a few sentences." She thought them less objectionable than I had done: but as it was getting late she conducted me to my chamber, which had formerly been her husband's, and said, "take courage: it was here that during six and forty years the most excellent of ministers used to prepare his discourses for the flock you will be called upon to address," and bidding me good night, she left me to myself.

The exciting scenes I had gone through, the touching account she had given me of her children, all out off in one week, and all at she had told me disposed me to that sort of emotion which

borders on enthusiasm. My heart beat violently, I had a choking sensation in my throat, and I threw open my window. The profound silence of the night made me think of the tomb—the village clock struck eleven, and gave me a sort of shudder. I imagined to myself the judgment day, and the sound of the last trumpet. Though calm and fine, the night was dark, with an occasional star twinkling and re-appearing through the fleecy clouds. A very few lights glimmered in the cottage-windows, and one by one were lost. I almost imagined I beheld the five children of the widow vanishing from the earth and going up before me into the skies. Just as the last light was extinguished a bright cloud passed and showed a most lovely star, which, to my excited imagination, pictured the young girl of eighteen, innocent, beautiful, clothed in her bridal attire. My eyes filled with tears, I fixed them on the star, and fancied I beheld, through its luminous rays, the aerial form of the young girl clothed with a glorious body. Just at that moment a plaintive song came from a cottage close by, proceeding from a woman who was watching by the side of a dying person. I know not whether the voice really did possess any peculiar sweetness, but it appeared to me the voices of the angels welcoming the young girl into the celestial mansions. I seemed to be no longer an inhabitant of earth, but lost in the immensity of eternity, and a crowd of the most sublime ideas presented themselves before me. Had I been able to transcribe them, what a sermon might I have preached; but the song ceased and the illusion vanished. I shut my window, I put out my light, and throwing myself on my bed, exhausted by fatigue and my overwrought feelings, I fell into a deep sleep, awoke not till roused in the morning by my good mother, who came to tell me the bells were already ringing for church. I dressed in haste, and tried to collect my ideas, but in vain. I had not even settled upon a text for my sermon; my dream and the exciting thoughts that had accompanied it still dwelt too strongly upon my mind. The death-bed song resounded in my ears, the loud striking of the clock, the gradual disappearance of the lights, and then the brightness of the stars were as vividly before me as on the previous night. I opened my window, hoping that the fresh air would disperse the visionary thoughts. The lovely view I beheld, the sound of the bleating flocks, and the cheerful song of the shepherds, with the joyous caroling of the birds, though they filled my mind with a different kind of rapture, still partook in some degree of the feelings which had so strongly possessed me. I heard the last chimes, and walked on to the church totally unprepared with a discourse, but confidently believing that I should be assisted when I once commenced. I read the prayers slowly, and with much devotion. Just opposite to me sat my adopted mother, and I constantly caught her eyes fixed upon me with intense feeling; and if they wandered away from me it was inva-

riably to a corner of the church in which I beheld five coronal garlands of myrtle intermixed with gilded leaves, and in the centre of each a large initial golden letter. I instantly guessed what they were, and my thoughts returned to all I had felt on the previous evening, and the affecting manner in which I had given myself as a son to console this tender mother. I cast my eyes down on my Bible, which happened to be open before me in the Book of Psalms. I instantly caught the passage—"Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears, for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." Psalm xxxix. 12. I took it for my text, and was astonished myself at the clearness and facility with which my ideas arranged themselves. I felt myself most forcibly that I was a stranger and a pilgrim; that no one, in fact, felt more real interest in me than the good widow whom I had never seen till the previous evening, and whose presence brought before me a crowd of sublime reflections on the piety, resignation, and confidence with which she had been enabled to submit her will to that of her heavenly Father, and whose whole conduct was a bright example of that which a village pastor's ought to be. I did not allude much to her, from a feeling of delicacy, but I spoke of her late husband, and of her children, and, turning my eyes to the myrtle crowns in the corner, I said, we see there before us a striking proof that man is indeed a stranger and a sojourner upon the earth, passing away as a shadow. A few withered leaves, adorned with a little tinsel, and watered with the tears of a tender mother, these are the only traces left of his passage through life; but are they the only consolations which remain to the bereaved parent? No, she dwells upon the assurance that if the beloved one died in Christ, he is now in possession of a crown that fadeth not away, and which neither time nor changes can deprive him of. A stranger he was on this earth of pain and sorrow, but his passage through it was only momentary, and now she feels he is gone to his home, to his everlasting rest, where suffering and sorrow cannot enter. My whole congregation was moved to tears, and I myself wept abundantly; it was a good omen, for those who weep together cannot but be friends. When the service was ended I retired into the vestry, and was surrounded by the elders of the parish, who declared with warm greetings that they had resolved to elect me. Amongst them what was my surprise at seeing my WORTHY patron, whom I had not noticed in the church. He approached me with an affable air, and muttered out some vain compliments, which I have completely forgotten. I was so happy that I never even thought of the mortification he must have felt. Indeed, at that moment, I was so thoroughly pleased with all around me, that I could have shaken hands with the most bitter enemy, and certainly I could not suffer my peace to be disturbed by the despicable man who had so vainly attempted to injure me.

CHAPTER V.

THE VICARAGE.

I was burning with impatience to see my good mother, who had preceded me to the vicarage; her kind congratulations were mingled with tears; and she told me at once that I was not to concern myself about my establishment, for that everything in the house was now exactly as her husband had left it; and that as she had adopted me as her son, she intended to share every expense with me. She had no one belonging to her but some very distant connections, who lived a great way off, and she, therefore, felt she had a perfect right to dispose of her property as she pleased. She proposed at once to send for the village lawyer, and have everything done in proper form; but I begged her to wait a little, not only from motives of delicacy, but also that it might not appear to my parishioners that their new pastor was avaricious. I assured her that I gratefully accepted her kind gifts with filial gratitude, but entreated her to delay the legal conveyance till I came to reside, which I hoped to do in a very short time. I can conscientiously declare that the idea of any advantage to myself had never once entered my head when I promised to be her son; for I felt at the time, if she had had nothing but rags, and I had come into bare walls, my sentiments towards her would have been the same; but still it was, of course, immensely agreeable to me to find she was so well off. I immediately regarded everything around me as my own, with all the warm interest of one's first possessions. I went over the house from top to bottom, examined all the furniture, sat down on every chair, and looked at the blankets and mattresses of every bed, and drew and undrew all the window curtains, with a satisfaction quite amusing. My good mother had been so excellent a housekeeper that there was the greatest abundance of every thing, and she had enormous chests filled with linen—but what a strange contradiction man is! I blush even now at the feelings which then entered my mind upon seeing the widow lay aside some of the handsomest table linen to give them as presents to her female relations; in fact, I actually felt no slight degree of jealousy; but the unworthy sentiment was but momentary, for my heart really was overflowing with joy. I had not only obtained the great object of my ambition, but far beyond it. I had my preferment; I had acquired a most kind and excellent mother, and a house furnished from the cellar to the garret. I thought only of happy days, devoid of care, and I never partook of a meal with such perfect appetite and hilarity. I beheld with pride the beautiful shining pewter dishes, in which it was served, and felt they were my own. Our future arrangements and plans of living were all discussed; and at night, when I retired to my chamber, I again opened my casement to feast my eyes on the lovely prospect before me: the church, the

village, and all I surveyed, I looked upon as my own; and my heart throbbed with joy and exultation. If I saw two peasants conversing in the street, I at once imagined they were talking of me, discussing my sermon, and speaking of me with reverence and affection. My joy was almost too great—I wished to calm my overwrought mind, and strolled out for a walk; but the enchantment pursued me through the fields, the meadows, and the woods; everything seemed made on purpose for the Vicar of Eizebach; and had I on that evening been able to make the tour of the globe I should still have said, it is for my happiness and comfort all this is framed. A lovely night succeeded the brilliant morning; the sky was studded with stars, not a cloud was to be seen, and I fancied I saw many thousands more than usual; they did not, as on the previous night, fill my mind with melancholy thoughts, but on the contrary; I rather regarded them as a kind of joyous illumination to welcome my arrival at Eizebach. I continued to stroll on till quite late. On my return, my kind hostess cordially welcomed me, and after some conversation, as I had to start early in the morning, I retired, saying from my heart that the month of my absence would appear very long till I saw her again. My good landlord, the brazier, warmly congratulated me on my success, and begged to contribute to my housekeeping by kindly presenting me with some useful articles in his trade. As I had seen so great a superabundance with the widow, I rather ungraciously declined them, which much annoyed the good man, and in consequence we separated rather coldly. I determined, therefore, to hurry my departure, and before the month was ended the same conveyance and driver again came to fetch me. I packed up my few effects and impatiently longed to see again my venerated friend. Having laid out the little money I possessed in paying my landlord, and buying a present for her, I wished to accelerate the pace of the sluggish horses, and the good peasant who drove me, and pleased myself with the idea of telling my adopted parent that I was now come to devote myself entirely to her comfort and happiness. As I approached the vicarage I was much surprised to see the whole court filled with people dressed in black, and passing to and fro, appearing at all the windows, even those of my own apartment, but my mother was no where visible. A fearful presentiment overpowered me, and, alas! it was only too speedily confirmed—no sooner had I alighted from my carriage than I learnt the sad truth, that on the preceding day my kind and excellent friend had been seized with apoplexy, and was found dead in her bed. Her cousins to the tenth degree instantly flocked to the house, and had been ever since fully occupied with packing into chests all the beautiful linen which I had looked upon as my own property. Some of them immediately on my arrival requested my permission to occupy two of the smaller chambers that they might deposit in them such things as they could not immediately remove

I solemnly protest, and after the confessions I have made I think I may be allowed credit for what I say, I never for one moment thought of the pecuniary losses I had sustained, or the valuable property which had so unexpectedly slipped from me. My whole thoughts and feelings were engrossed by the painful deprivation of the kind and excellent woman, to whom in one day I had really attached myself as strongly as if I had known her for years. Could I have recalled her, not only would I have sacrificed the property she had intended for me, but I would have gladly resigned half my income and slept on a bed of straw, could these sacrifices have availed; but, alas! it could not be. I begged her relations to make what use they pleased of my house, and then I visited with deep emotion the room in which her venerated remains lay. I moved aside the covering from her face, and found it but little altered; the extreme paleness was just the same, and the perfect composure and sweet smile; I should have supposed her to be asleep; and I pressed her cold cheek with a sensation of awe. Thus, thought I, has death put an end to all thy sorrows, good mother; thou art now again united to thy five beloved ones; the sight of their withered garlands will no longer cause thy tears to flow; but he whom thou didst so generously adopt must weep alone over thy grave. Oh, that he may at least inherit thy virtues, and thy resignation. Alas! who knows what trials may await me in this residence, where thou didst so patiently endure so much grief? Should I be called upon to sustain such afflictions,—and who can dare hope to be exempt from sorrow?—I will go into that chamber where thou didst watch the dying pangs of thy dear children, I will imitate thy piety and courage, and think of that moment when I also shall stand in need of some kind hand to close mine eyes. At this moment two of her relations entered the apartment in a state of great anxiety and nervousness, and asked me if I was aware that the deceased having died without a will they claimed everything as her natural heirs. “We have been told,” said they, “that she had made known to you that she would leave you her property, and that she had said so to several persons; but have you any documents or written promise to bring forward—and do you mean to oppose our rights?” “By no means,” replied I, “it is not her wealth I regret. Enjoy it yourselves in peace and honour; were it a kingdom I should say the same, and with equal sincerity.” I then bent over the coffin to give one last kiss to the cold pale forehead. I took up one of the flowers which had been placed there, and then took my place with her relations to conduct her to her last resting place. When the funeral was over I went to the house of the schoolmaster, and requested him to give me a bed till I could purchase sufficient furniture for my immediate use. He was fully aware of my awkward situation, and the reason why I had brought nothing with me; for the widow had openly expressed her intentions towards me. He said

to me what a pity it was she had not left any writing to prove my claim; but I really did feel glad she had not done so; for I thought of all the relations, disappointed in their expectations, and perhaps cursing the excellent creature who merited nothing but blessings. No unworthy feelings on my part had accompanied her to the tomb, nor any thought to bring a blush into my cheeks; and these thoughts consoled me for the loss of my inheritance. I heard next morning that the relations had passed the whole night in packing, and that their conveyance had arrived to take them away. The keys of the house were brought me, and I entered my abode to see nothing but bare walls, but with a peace of mind undisturbed, and in the words of Virgil I exclaimed—"my household gods I salute you; let us make libations to Jupiter." I then turned to the schoolmaster and said, "these grateful tears are my best libations." He stared at me with a vacant look, and evidently thought I wept at the desolate and empty appearance of my abode, and he uttered words of condolence on my disappointment. "My friend," said I, "no house can be considered empty that is inhabited by a contented mind, at peace with itself and all mankind. What matters it, after all, how one is lodged for a few moments? We came naked into our first home, and we shall return naked to our last, with only a winding-sheet, or a useless pillow. How foolish, then, we are, when we torment ourselves with eager desires after more than the absolute necessities of life during the short interval which separates these two states." "No doubt, sir, and all you say is most beautiful; but still, sir, you can never do without a bed and some chairs; and I have been telling all your trouble to some of the chief parishioners. Oh, here they are already," said he, looking into the court. I looked out and beheld a whole crowd of men, women, and children, all loaded with different articles of furniture and utensils. In a few moments my house was furnished far beyond my wants, and though the amount contributed by each individual was not a great deal for them to spare, the whole was amply abundant for me. I could not refuse their gifts, even if I had ever so much wished to do so, and the feeling of gratitude for their kindness proved a sweet and binding link between us. They did not even forget to bring me provisions sufficient to last for several days, and I had my dinner laid for me under the shade of some magnificent chestnut trees, just before the door of my house. Could I have forgotten the absence of my excellent hostess I should have been the very happiest of men. I had scarcely finished my repast when the chief farmer brought to me, by way of dessert, a quarter's rent for the Vicarage lands, and I looked upon myself as quite a rich man, and truly luxuriated in my house, my garden, and my charming view. Being a holiday, every one seemed to be enjoying themselves thoroughly: the children in their best clothes were playing about under the lime trees; the young people

either dancing or walking arm in arm; the women at the doors of their houses conversing together, and groups of peasants seated on benches or the trunks of the trees quietly enjoying their pipes, or perhaps looking at the sky to judge of the weather for to-morrow; the distant bells of the grazing flocks fell upon my ear, and my mind recurred to my early youth when such scenes were quite familiar to me. I thought of my father, and inwardly resolved to follow his excellent example, to endeavour myself to practise that which I should preach, and to cultivate to the uttermost reciprocal sentiments of affection and kindness between myself and my parishioners. I felt as if I could not admit a single spark of anger or bitterness against any human being; and I could, from my very heart, and without the least affectation, have said to all the world—love me as I love you; in fact I verily believe I should at that moment have been capable of making any sacrifice in my power for the good of my fellow-creatures. I strolled out into the fields to breathe the fresh air, preferring the open country to the chance of meeting any one in the village, lest they should disturb the ecstatic feelings which possessed me, and which seemed to lift me entirely above the earth. In a short time I sought the solitude of my chamber, thinking that I should there sooner subside into calm and quiet composure. I could not be said to reflect, nor had I even any very distinct ideas. My mind was rather like a becalmed sea, whose surface seems to shadow forth a thousand fantastic images. I pictured to myself angelic beings, quite different from any I had ever met with, intellectual and faultless; and mixed them up with all my future plans of happiness and usefulness. Imagining some one in particular formed on purpose for me, and who was to assist me in every good project. In the midst of this elysium I was suddenly brought to myself by the entrance of the school-master's daughter, who came in to perform some necessary arrangements in my room. She was a very common-place looking girl, with perhaps rather a nice figure; but at that moment I was so worked up that she really seemed to realize the visions I had been indulging in, and I was so absurd, (I blush to acknowledge it), that I stood several moments gazing upon her before I quitted the room to allow her to proceed with her work. But by degrees I awoke from my trance, and when she came down stairs to wish me good evening, and ask if I required anything further, I was once more alive to the every-day-concerns of life.

CHAPTER VI.

MY MARRIAGE.

Some days elapsed before I altogether became calm and settled. and I often even now recur to the feelings of enthusiasm and virtuous resolutions in which the first days of my residence, at my own parsonage, were passed. I always feel an earnest desire to realize the determination I then entered into, and to perform my sacred duties as a minister to the very best of my power, and in humble dependance on the Almighty; and I also resolved to be a model father and the most devoted of husbands. In the course of a few weeks I was requested by a neighbouring clergyman, who was not well, to take his duty for him. His wife met me in the garden, and received me with the greatest cordiality, saying how delighted she was that I had come to settle at Eizebach, with a hundred other complimentary speeches. I knew that she and her husband were well off, and that they had only two children, a son and a daughter. The good lady was not long before she threw out hints to discover whether or not I was married; and I easily perceived that she had a design upon me for her daughter. I therefore determined to be on my guard; and, on entering the house, I was still more confirmed in my suspicions, for I beheld the young lady dressed out in her best attire; and when I was presented to her she blushed up to the eyes, and returned my salutation with a most embarrassed air. The father entered; a fine old man of a striking and venerable appearance, and of kind and unaffected manners. I returned his civilities with great reserve; and felt, in fact, predisposed to view every thing with a prejudiced eye. I persuaded myself that his smile was full of irony, and that the expression of his countenance denoted avarice and evil passions. His wife, with her overstrained politeness, I looked upon as an insupportable flatterer; and the young girl I thought extremely common-place, possessing nothing but coarse rosy cheeks which the fairness of her complexion helped to set off; her extreme silence put down to awkwardness; but I plainly saw that no pains had been spared to render apparent the easy circumstances of the family. The breakfast table was covered with linen of the finest texture and most snowy whiteness; the cups and saucers were of the best china, and the spoons all silver. The mother constantly continued to throw open the buffet in which was pompously displayed a complete set of spoons and forks, with two large silver candlesticks; and every time the manoeuvre took place I turned aside my head, and always caught a sly smile on the old man's face when I did so. At last he said, "dear wife, what is the meaning of this unusual bustle? is it a fete day or a birth day? Our daughter is dressed as grand as if she was going to stand godmother." The young girl blushed like a piony. Her mother stammered out words of desiring to give a kind welcome to her new neigh-

boir, which had the effect of rendering me still more distant and reserved, and the young girl, on some pretence or other, stole out of the room. No sooner had she gone than her mother burst forth into the most rhapsodical praises of her, and declared she was the sweetest temper and the best manager possible. I felt convinced it had all been arranged before hand; and let the old lady chat on without taking any notice, till her husband at last said, "why, my dear wife, what wonderful herb have you met with this morning to make you so charmed with Augusta?—you generally have faults enough to find with her." "Nonsense, my dear," replied the wife, "those are only trifles, for she never gave me any real reason to be angry with her." "Oh, my dear, don't suppose I was blaming you, for, however excellent the dear girl is, you are her mother, and of course it is your duty to reprove her when she does wrong." "But she never does do wrong," said the old lady pettishly; "she is superior in every thing." "Oh no," said the old gentleman, "you are wrong there, for she is far from being as yet a first rate housekeeper, neither is she as advanced in piety or benevolence as many women are; for instance, she is far behind yourself, my dear."

He then turned round to me and commenced a discussion on theological subjects, which I most willingly entered into, glad enough to get rid of the troublesome woman, and I kept up the conversation till church time.

When I got into the pulpit I found Miss Augusta exactly opposite to me, so that it was impossible to avoid looking at her, though she kept her eyes steadfastly fixed upon her book. When the singing commenced, however, she raised her soft blue eyes, and I could not but feel struck with the sweet voice that proceeded from her half-opened lips, nor avoid remarking her well turned head, which was a little inclined towards the choir, and her whole attitude I thought peculiarly graceful. When I commenced preaching she gradually acquired a look of deep and fixed attention; and her countenance lighted up with an expression which I thought positively handsome. My prejudices speedily vanished away; and I made up my mind to offer her my arm in walking home, but she had slipped out before I could leave the vestry, and reached the house before me. Well, she is certainly handsome, said I, but what is it to me, for I am resolved not to be caught by her. No sooner had I reached the drawing room than the old lady again commenced her praises, and tried in vain to make the fair Augusta pass her opinion upon my sermon; the latter maintained a rigid silence, and if I had not before noticed her retiring modesty I should have either concluded that she had not listened to it, or that she had not been pleased with it; I felt, however, sure of the contrary, and I accordingly construed her silence into sheer obstinacy, or determined rudeness. The mother still resolved to get hold of me, if possible, and insisted upon my going nolenus

volens all over the house, and pointing out all the treasures destined for her daughter whenever she should marry. Do your best, grumbled I to myself; all your traps are set in vain. If you had twice as many rooms as you have, and each one better furnished than the last, I would never marry your daughter; in fact, her open attack upon my heart quite disgusted me, and also made me feel ridiculous in my own eyes. I was fully prepared for a grand set out dinner, and expected to hear fresh encomiums on Miss Augusta, and I resolved beforehand to taste of every dish and praise none, and determined I would confine the conversation as much as possible to theological subjects with the old minister. After having shown me everything she designed for her daughter's portion, the old lady said, "we are told by the wise King that we must not set our hearts upon riches; but still it is a great comfort to be well provided for, and a clergyman above all others should be very careful to begin life free from debt, so that it is a great advantage if he meets with a lady who is well off. But I doubt not my dear young friend," said she, with what she intended for a very insinuating air, "I doubt not you have already thought about all these things, and perhaps you are already happy enough to be engaged." "Just so, madam," said I, with a slight bow; "you have guessed right." Alas, I at once fell into the deception, never reflecting on the falsehood I was uttering, from the sheer desire to rid myself of her troublesome importunity. "Dear me," said she, "is it a long engagement—will it soon take place?" "Very soon," replied I; and I expected to find an immediate change in her manner towards me, but to my great astonishment she seized hold of my hand, and pressing it with great warmth, said, "my dear sir, accept my sincere good wishes for yourself and your intended; and may you long live happily together. Every one speaks of you as a most excellent worthy young man, who has done himself great credit at college, and is beloved by the parsons of Eizebach. May you ever possess the same unblemished reputation and conscious rectitude, and may the blessing of heaven rest upon you. An early and a happy marriage I have always considered as one of the greatest blessings, and I trust your wife will prove as great a treasure to you as I had hoped—as,—as,—as,"—she stopped, wiped her eyes, and added, "as great a comfort to you as I have always endeavoured to be to my dear husband." She then led the way back to the drawing room, entering which she said to her husband and daughter, "our good young friend tells me he is engaged to be married." The old man looked at her with a triumphant air, shook me warmly by the hand and congratulated me, and I felt horribly ashamed and embarrassed with my lie.

"Well, wife," said he, as we took our places at the dinner table, "I will venture to say that both Augusta and I shall eat now with a much better appetite than before we heard this news." Indeed

the timid silent girl really did appear quite a different creature; she conversed freely, and gave her opinion of my sermon with great naiveté, even defending it against the criticisms of her father. They asked me a number of questions about my intended, and drank her health with great cordiality and unrestrained freedom, though I felt dreadful twinges of conscience at the duplicity of my conduct. "Well, my dear wife," said my host, "I think you also feel more at ease since you have been obliged to lay aside your matrimonial schemes. Another time you will not attempt such tortuous and foolish ways. Whenever we do fall into them, be assured the influence extends itself over not only our hearts and minds, but is even apparent in our very manners; so that we cannot command the words we wish to say; our tongues run on without discretion or sense. I assure you, my dear, I hardly knew you to-day—you seem to act and speak with art and dissimulation, in short, you are totally unlike yourself." Completely taken aback by the frankness of the good minister, I felt more and more ashamed of myself, and cast down my eyes with a furtive glance at Augusta, who looked even more uncomfortable than myself. She turned crimson and white alternately, and raised toward her father the most supplicating looks, which he did not appear to notice. "Indeed, indeed, my dear," said the old lady, "I was anything but false; with my whole heart I desired to succeed, but it is ordained otherwise, and we must be satisfied. I never would act with deception, not even if Augusta was to remain single for ever; and surely there could be no harm." "You mean, my dear, that there is no harm in helping on by a little art the designs of Providence. Believe me, dear wife, whatever God wills he will bring to pass, whether man meddles with it or not; but still I know it is hard not to feel over anxious about what we earnestly desire. All I say is, never attempt to bring it about by underhand means. Rely on it, it is always better to let young people become acquainted with each other, and if they really suit, then speak of it openly. If the young man is upright, and worth having, he will be sure to deal frankly; if he is only trifling he is a vain, conceited coxcomb, and not worth thinking about." I felt still more wretched and confounded, and knew not which way to look. As for poor Augusta, she was overpowered; the tears coursed each other down her cheeks, and she would fain have quitted the room if her father had not held her tight; the mother still argued on, and would not yield her point. "Men know nothing about these matters, my dear," said she, "or the delicacy of feeling, which would prevent a young girl, however much she might desire a match, from permitting it to be openly suggested—ask Augusta yourself." "Mamma is quite right," said Augusta, with her eyes still bent to the ground; "but dear papa I see you want some more cider, I will go and fetch you some." She again attempted to rise, but he withheld her, and said, "no, my

dear, in this solitary instance your dear mother is wrong; you, I knew, had nothing to do with her plans, and are therefore not implicated in what I say; but your mother, if she desired to make an engagement for you, ought to have spoken of it openly." "Dear, dear, papa," said Augusta, in a tone of deep entreaty. He looked at her tenderly, patted her cheek, and suffered her to retire; and then, turning to me, said, "my friend I feel sure you are what your physiognomy bespeaks you, an honest, sincere, and sensible man. You will not laugh at us when I tell you that, from the report we heard of you, we were exceedingly desirous that you should become our son-in-law, because we considered it would be for the happiness of our dear child, who, I will now say, with truth, does really deserve all the praises her poor mother bestowed upon her. Our wishes, however, are not to be fulfilled, since you are already engaged. But that need not prevent our being excellent friends and neighbours." And he stretched forth his venerable hand across the table, which I seized, and pressed to my lips, and covered with my tears, more and more deeply ashamed of my own conduct, as I was filled with admiration at his frankness and simplicity. "Now, dearest wife," said he, drawing his hand across his eyes to conceal the involuntary tears, "I have told our friend what we had contemplated, and we are all three weeping. But we have gained a friend, at any rate, and his wife shall be welcome to us as a second daughter. You do not blame me for speaking to him now, as I wished to have done at first. Had you done so, instead of making yourself ridiculous by your conduct, the young man would have told you, I have already engaged myself, and the matter would have ended. I confess to you I was hurt and surprised to see you yesterday, 'midst all the tears and entreaties of Augusta, to leave matters alone, and thus to have avoided all this scene, and to leave all to Providence. The delicacy, dignity, and innocence of your child pleaded with you, but you would not listen to her." The poor old lady burst into tears; she sobbed forth, "I own I was wrong, my dearest husband; but are you not yourself to blame for thus exposing the matter to our neighbour?" "No," said he, no, my dear. I quickly perceived that the young man saw through all your plans, and I could not bear that he should suppose our modest and good Augusta capable of being a party concerned, to be willing to leave her father's house as if she was quitting a den of robbers; but thank God he is an engaged man, and therefore we can speak to him freely." His wife threw herself on his neck, and said, "I own, indeed, I was wrong." He pressed her to his heart, and said, "never let us speak of it again; but go, dearest, and call back our daughter." "One moment!" exclaimed I—"Oh, give me your daughter! I am free—both heart and hand—and if she can but love me, oh, give her to me, and you will indeed make me a happy man." The mother stared at me with astonishment mingled with

joy; but the father, in a cold and serious tone, said, "neighbour, what am I to think, did you not tell my wife you were engaged?" Then, relaxing into a half smile, he said, "oh, I see now how it is; you thought you had no other means of escaping our persecutions: was not this the case?" Shame covered me with blushes, and I said, "ah, my good friend, you looked upon me as simple and sincere, and you find me, alas, false and dishonest. I can make no excuse for the improper manner in which I have acted; only let me not bear the penalty of my folly by refusing to grant me that which I so highly prize." "I must pardon you, I suppose," said he, "because I have forgiven my wife. But, dearest wife, you see you are now paid back in your own coin. Well, neighbour, you ask me for my Augusta; you are in possession of what we had wished for; and now you have nothing to do but to persuade her to be of the same mind. She is well worthy of your attachment; try to gain her affections, and come and see us as often as you like. I give you my word she shall know nothing of this conversation. In three months we will resume it; you will require this time at least to know one another thoroughly; and depend upon it these three months will not be the most tedious or the most unhappy that you have passed in your life." He then rung the bell, and his daughter came in with two fresh bottles of cider; her eyes were red, and her manner embarrassed; but as she heard her father and me deep in some theological disputation, she by degrees recovered her composure. The old minister shortly after took his afternoon's nap, his wife went upon some household affairs, and Augusta and I strolled first into the garden and orchard, and from thence into the fields. I now looked upon her in quite a different light, and already regarded her as my dear wife, and the future companion of my life. Her rosy cheeks, so far from offending me, lighted up, as I thought, her fair complexion. I admired her freshness, her innocence, and her sweet blue eyes, which occasionally kindled with vivacity, while her laughing rosy lips constantly shewed to great advantage her fine and regular teeth. As she stepped before me in a narrow path, I thought how beautiful her figure was, and how full of grace and dignity her step; and having presently after offered her my arm, we conversed with the greatest confidence and friendship of her childhood and her parents; but more especially of her father, whom she seemed to love with a tenderness, respect, and devotion, beyond expression. I had great difficulty in restraining myself from betraying my feelings of admiration to her. I returned home late, and at break of day I directed my telescope, which was the only thing I possessed that had belonged to my father, to the parsonage of Hazelrode, that I might feast my eyes on the abode which contained my beloved Augusta.

The three months passed rapidly away; I had never known what true love was before; for though I had once been drawn into r

flirtation with a mere coquette, the sentiments I experienced towards Augusta were of a very different nature; they were so true, so pure, that they occupied my whole heart, and gave me quite a new existence. In her presence I never thought of shewing off my talents, or dazzling her by my wit; but I earnestly desired to improve in real worth and excellence, and to fit myself not only for a sphere of usefulness in this life, but for that world which is to come. My previous studies and my cold calculating philosophy had rather tended to darken my religious views, and weaken my faith; but the indulgence of a virtuous attachment, by elevating my mind, and infusing into it a pure and ardent love, seemed to disperse all the clouds, and the horror of the tomb, and the dread of annihilation, or the dark unknown of the future, which had so often disturbed my mind. I felt that the great earthly happiness I enjoyed was but a type of that which the beneficent Creator designed for his creatures hereafter.

The white pocket handkerchief, I have before spoken of, was the precious signal to me of my Augusta being occupied with some thoughts of me; and, as I flew across to meet her, every thing around me appeared clothed with additional interest and beauty. Our wedding did not take place till the following spring, and Augusta's father himself pronounced the nuptial benediction, and in giving me the most adored of wives he became to me the most beloved of fathers.

The following day we stole away from all our friends, and quietly going through the garden took the path to Eizebach. Shall I ever forget that walk, when leaning upon my arm, I was conducting my beloved to my own house, to her home, to be my companion, and my friend!—the dearest half of myself. I had thought of devoting a whole chapter to the account of this walk, and meant to dedicate it to bachelors, but I thought, if not engaged, they would not be able to appreciate the happiness I described, and that married men would think their own experience still more delightful; and, yet it is, after all, to the married men that I appeal, and not to those selfish beings who prefer a life of independence. You who have known what it is to bring your wife to her home, to introduce there a young, tender, and lovely bride, read this chapter. Seated by her side, or if she is no longer with you, go to her grave and read it there, and still say, how happy is that man who has been permitted to form so sweet, so tender a tie, which death even cannot dis sever, though it may interrupt it for a short period.

Just as we were within a hundred yards of the village we met a superb carriage, drawn by four magnificent horses, with two smart footmen behind, in new and gorgeous liveries. It was Mr. Skinck, the agent, to whom, just before I had taken possession of my living, the Baron Rangard had let his castle. I had never had opportunity of seeing him, as he had been constantly ab-

sent, paying his addresses to a lady of large fortune. He was just married, and bringing her home in triumph. As soon as he saw me he stopped the carriage, and putting his head out of the window, said, "I am happy to meet you, vicar, and to introduce you to my bride." I congratulated him, and said, "I also am taking home my bride, for I was married only yesterday." "That is droll," said he; "in a hundred years one might not meet with such a curious coincidence." He saluted my wife and presented his lady to her; she gave me a condescending smile, and bowed slightly to Augusta, who trembled and cast down her eyes, whilst she examined her with a rude stare from head to foot. The agent stepped out of his carriage, and proposed to his wife to walk up to the castle. She looked as if she would rather remain where she was; but, without waiting for an answer, he lifted her out, and signed to the coachman to drive on. We walked on,—Madame Skinck cold and disdainful, Madame Bemrode shy and uncomfortable, and I by no means pleased at this untoward interruption of my delightful tête à tête. Mr. Skinck was quite at his ease: he professed the greatest admiration of my wife; laughed and talked gaily, and said, "you two are still turtle doves, as you were only married yesterday. I and my wife are quite old married folks, for our wedding took place a week ago, and we are already tired of each other—are we not, dear?" No doubt he meant this for a joke, but she evidently did not like it, and I was extremely annoyed. Madam Skinck was dressed in the height of fashion, covered with jewels and flounced up to her knees. My Augusta had on a plain white muslin dress, and a neat straw bonnet, tied under her chin, with violet ribbons; the traces of the tears, which our tender conversation had brought into her eyes, still remained; and she was altogether very uncomfortable. "Fair lady," said the agent, "as it has been our happy chance to meet, you and the vicar must positively spend the day with us." In vain did I make excuses; he would not listen to them; but taking my wife by the arm, whilst he requested me to give mine to Madame Skinck, he walked on to the castle gates; arrived at the door, he at once proceeded up stairs, and, throwing open a door on the first landing, said, "there, my love, is your own apartment." It was magnificently furnished, but the lady cast a disdainful glance around it, and said, "I expected an ante-chamber, but in this old castle I suppose it would have been difficult to manage it; however it is pretty tolerable for the country. What is your opinion, Madam?" Augusta declared she had never seen anything more beautiful. "Do you think so?" said she; "why the curtains do not at all correspond with the rest of the furniture; but this sofa is really good taste—let us try if it is comfortable." Saying this, she plunged herself down amongst the rose-coloured satin cushions, and then getting up again, almost immediately, and turning to her husband, she said, "what sort of a dining room have you?" "We

will come and see it," replied he; "and also the drawing room; it is all newly furnished, and I have no doubt you will like it." He then again offered his arm to Augusta, but I said rather crossly, "Mr. Skinck, my wife is very anxious to see her new home, and I also am impatient to get back; you will, therefore, permit us to take our leave." Madame Skinck made a low courtesy, the agent attempted some foolish jokes, but I was firm and took my departure.

This unlucky meeting destroyed nearly all my pleasure. I had taken so much interest and pains in having every thing nicely arranged for my Augusta. I had a large walnut cabinet, with folding doors handsomely carved, in the end of the room; a sofa, and seven rush chairs, nicely shaped; a pretty cherry tree table between the two windows, under a mirror large enough to reflect the figure of my sweet Augusta; in another corner a small table, with two drawers in it, covered with green oil cloth. I, myself, had painted the walls of the room with garlands of roses, on a foundation of clear green velvet, not very artistically, perhaps, because I was not much of a painter, and I had only thought of it a fortnight before my marriage; but the whole had an exceedingly pretty effect. The evening before my wedding I had looked at it with the greatest complacency and delight, and enjoyed the surprise and pleasure my Augusta would feel when I first brought her into this pretty room; but now that she had once seen the boudoir of the agent's wife, how could I expect her to like my humble chamber? how could I think she would admire a sofa of cane, without any cushions, after the luxurious satin pillows of Madame Skinck? Till the moment in which we had met their carriage my heart had been filled with the most tender emotions; but when I heard the tiresome agent proudly say to his wife, "my dear, this is your own apartment," I had a painful feeling, that it was exactly what I should have liked to say to Augusta, and her air of admiration when she replied to Madame Skinck, "I never saw anything more beautiful," caused a painful feeling at my heart, and the first steps I took on leaving that detestable castle were anything but agreeable; but when we reached our own little shrubbery, Augusta tenderly embraced me, and said, "well, dear one, how happy we shall be! we shall never be like those people." "Oh, no, no," said I, laying my hand on my heart, "never, never, my beloved one, shall we get tired of each other;" and from that moment the beautiful rooms, the satin cushions, and all vanished from my mind, and I felt happiness. Joy again sprang up within me, and those visions of felicity, at that moment presented to my imagination, have all been realized. My little parsonage is still the temple of love and happiness. It is true we have shed some tears there; but what mortal is there who never has done so? at least they have never been occasioned by rage, envy, disgust, or humiliation. But I must check my pen, I hear my Augusta's

step, it is heavier and slower than it used to be, but the feelings which lead her to enter my sanctum are as kind, as affectionate, and as true as ever. And I hear that step still with the same pleasure, and welcome it as that of an angel who brings me peace, blessing, and happiness.

CHAPTER VII.

MY WIFE.

I wish my readers could have seen my dear Augusta when first I married her; they would have been better able to make allowances for the heading of this chapter, and also for many of my fond expressions and tender recollections. But I still love to dwell upon them, and I flatter myself there may be some who will read this little work who can enter into them, and enjoy with sympathetic feeling that happiness which I describe. I did not half know all her worth when I married her. I felt that she was beautiful, agreeable, kind, gentle, and well disposed. I had heard she played nicely on the piano, but I had no great opinion of her talents, for she had never yet played before me, and I could not conceive she would have lost an opportunity of shewing herself off to advantage before her lover, or that her father, who loved her so tenderly, would not have been anxious to make her perform, if she did excel; he was in all things so proud of her. And besides, there was not a word said about bringing her instrument with her. But just three months after our marriage, on her birth-day, on entering our sitting room in the morning, we discovered a beautiful new piano-forte lying open, and on the music desk a packet of music, and some verses composed by my father-in-law for his beloved daughter. Augusta uttered an exclamation of joy and surprise, and took up the music to read it. She then seated herself at the instrument; played the air and variations in the most masterly manner; then opened her rosy lips to accompany the music with a voice so sweet and so soft, that I was entranced. But she was soon too much moved to continue the song, though able to go through with the air, which she did with the most perfect taste and expression; and, getting up, threw herself into my arms, with sobs of tenderness and delight. I was perfectly astounded, and exclaimed, "what, my Augusta, you possess such a talent, and have never yet imparted it to me?" "It would have been no pleasure to you to have known it, dearest Charles, whilst I had not any instrument to play upon. Listen, dear one," said she, seeing me about to speak—"I love music passionately, but so does my dear father too. It was he who taught me, and he was the very best of masters. But a piano-

forte is fearfully expensive. My parents spent a great deal of money in my *trousseau*, and I would not allow them to purchase me one, nor could I bear to deprive my father of his: and you, my dearest Charles, I knew you were not rich, and therefore from the moment our marriage was settled, I left off playing. My dear father often complained of it, but I always turned aside the subject by saying—Oh, mamma is quite right; she says married women have too many other things to do. By degrees he ceased to press me, and that is the reason why you have never heard any thing about it. I cannot imagine how my kind father has managed to procure me this piano; but I do own it is a delight to me to be able to enjoy my music again, and to be able to play to you and amuse you, my dear one." With another embrace she again seated herself at the instrument, and played divinely for more than half an hour, finishing by an *adagio* so thrilling that it seemed like the parting sigh of an expiring saint.

At ten o'clock our good parents arrived. Augusta threw herself into her father's arms, unable to speak. "Young lady," said he, laughing, "you thought you had caught your old father; but I saw through you all along. I knew your kind heart too well, and saw through your motive in depriving yourself of your music for four months. I could not rob you of your satisfaction in acting as you did, but at last I was quite weary of never hearing my dear pupil play: and now, madam, let me see whether you have forgotten my instruction. Come, do honour to your master, and repair your lost time, and you will be able to practise both at your old home and your new one." The father, mother, and daughter all shed tears of joy, and whilst the two ladies withdrew I related to my father-in-law the delightful surprise it had been to me to hear my wife's powers as a musician. He laughed heartily. Shortly after the mother and daughter returned, Augusta went up to her father, and sobbing with emotion said,—“Now, dear father, I know all.” He stopped her saying anything more; but shaking his finger playfully at his wife, he said—“Ah! you old chatterer.” She approached him and said—“Augusta knows all. I could not keep it from her. “Why, halloa,” said he, “what fine history have you made out? It is only just this, my dear sir. For three whole months Augusta deprived herself of the pleasure of touching her piano. To deceive me she pretended that she no longer cared about music. I saw through her purpose, which was, not to deprive me of my piano. Well, I kept the instrument, because I would not pain her; but I resolved, in my turn, to catch her in my trap, and so instead of four glasses of wine daily, which I always used to drink, I only took one, on the plea that wine did not agree with me. By this means I saved above twenty crowns, and with some other little acts of economy I got together the sum, and enjoyed the pleasure of deceiving Madam Augusta.” I learnt many other of the perfections and accomplishments, by degrees,

which her innocent modesty would have kept concealed from me, and I was quite vain of her, and wished that all our neighbours, and especially the agent and his wife, who often treated us with great hauteur, could know how very superior she was. But she in society was always reserved and silent, and only when alone with me permitted her talents to shine forth. Every day I found out something new, and every day my admiration increased, like that of the botanist, who, seeking after rare plants, examines them with care, discovering all their beauties, their different properties and sweet perfume; and not satisfied with himself enjoying what he has found, likes to proclaim his good fortune to others. The disposition of my wife was serious and refined. She had the greatest abhorrence of everything bordering on detraction, and her modesty always withheld her from giving her opinion on any very deep subjects. I had rather, she would say, listen to those who know better than I do, or perhaps I might humble those who know less than what my good father took so much pains to teach me. I one day reproved her for being too silent. She replied, "in a short time, dear husband, these lips will have lost their freshness, these cheeks their colour, and these eyes their brilliancy." "I was not speaking of that, Augusta, I was talking of your wit, your knowledge, and your good sense." "Ah! dear husband," she replied, I know that as to what I say may be considered clever and witty, but if I get into the habit of talking, what will be thought of me when I no longer possess the attractions of youth? Do you not know Madam Muller?" "What, that tiresome, ill-tempered old lady?"—"Old! why she is not more than six and thirty. But how do you like her?" "I think her excessively disagreeable—she may be clever, perhaps, but"—"Well, my father, who knew her when she was young, says she was run after by every one. She was beautiful, accomplished, and so brilliant and sparkling in her conversation that she was always surrounded by admirers." "Impossible!—she has not the least trace either of beauty or agreeableness." "I thought so, too, and said so to my father; but he assured me it was nevertheless true; but she suffered from poverty, and all the miseries it brings in its train. She lost her beauty, her flow of spirits, and that delicacy of feeling which renders a young person so attractive. Gallant speeches and delicate flattery, when offered to a person who possesses confidence in themselves, excite gaiety, and develop character; but when biting cares and anxious thoughts take possession of the mind, and bring wrinkles into the forehead of a woman, all her chief attractions disappear, and with them the crowd of admirers, flatterers, and pretended friends, who surrounded her. She perceived it, and want, melancholy, and disappointment rendered her capacious and discontented. For some years past Madame Muller has been entirely taken up with the cares of housekeeping, and providing for her large family. She has had no time for the cultiva-

tion of her mind, and no object in rendering herself amiable to the world. I dare say she is so to her husband and children, and that ought to be enough for her," said she, with a smile. "I at least desire no greater pleasure, and if I were now to waste my time in seeking to make myself agreeable to the world, I should very soon be like poor Madame Muller, and have nothing left to console me for the trifling popularity I might obtain." My wife said what was true, and I never see an aged lady without thinking you once had your bright days of admiration, and I always try to say some kind word to recall in some degree those pleasurable sensations, and never fail to be paid by a kind smile and pleased look in return. But enough upon my wife. Doubtless she had some faults, for who has not? I will, therefore, conclude my chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PARVENU.

Mr. Skinck, whom we had so inopportunately met on the day after our wedding, was just what one would call a parvenu. He began life as a mere servant in a public office: writing an excellent hand, and showing great zeal in the interests of his employers, had brought him into favour with their chief; and after a time he retired, and with his savings purchased a small farm, his old patron still continuing to assist him, and take advantage of every opportunity in his way of advancing him. He possessed a great deal of sharpness, and showed so much intelligence in the different affairs he was employed in, that he acquired considerable reputation as a trust-worthy man of business. A good legacy having unexpectedly fallen to him, still further added to his consequence, and enabled him to rent the very considerable farm of Eizebach. Count Rangard never resided on his property, and permitted him to occupy his castle. He then succeeded in obtaining the hand of a rich heiress, and settled down in our village. As a bachelor he had lived very simply, and occupied himself wholly with his farm; though he had always been very well dressed and smart in his appointments, the family to which he had allied himself being one of the richest and most considerable of the province, he wished by his luxury and expense to efface the lowness of his origin, and put himself on a level with his wife's relatives, whose nobility consisted chiefly in the length of their purse, and who without any real generosity, spent a great deal, and by their ostentation seemed to suppose that money was everything in the world. Skinck was believed by them to be enormously rich, and to be in a fair way of becoming more and more so; they, there-

fore, made no difficulty of accepting him as a suitor, and he set up his house in first-rate style—the most splendid furniture, the finest horses, magnificent equipages, numberless domestics, a first-rate cook, and game-keepers; in short, the whole train of a nobleman. He thought by these means to make others forget, and he certainly at times forgot himself, that he had ever been a public servant. Others were not so oblivious, and his own servants often contrived to remind him of it: he was continually on thorns if anything occurred to bring before him his early career. He did much in imposing on persons of an inferior class, with whom he was affable without familiarity, and he attracted to his home the poor nobility whom he flattered in a cringing and servile manner, thinking himself well paid for his good dinners and vast expenses, by receiving at his house persons of rank and title on intimate terms. His wife had all the purse-proud importance of her family. She held in contempt her husband's reverence for rank, and pretended to look down upon the poor nobility, who considered her much beneath them. At first this caused many altercations between the newly-married couple, and in one of their disputes the wife had the want of tact to upbraid him with having been a mere clerk. From that moment all confidence and friendship was completely at an end. He never forgave her, and they cordially hated each other. We had always kept up terms of intimacy, but Madame Skinck and my wife never could assimilate, and, in spite of all I could say, my wife behaved to her with the most distant coolness. I one day asked her how it was she appeared to get on so much better with the agent than his wife. "Why, he is only vain," replied she; "but she behaves with the most insulting haughtiness. He will talk about his London coachman, and his magnificent service of plate, his French cook, &c. &c., while she says how wretched it must be to eat off pewter, and I never could touch a thing that was served in anything but the very best china. I am never angry with the agent for all his boasting, because he seems so happy; and his foolish vanity does harm to no one; but his wife offends me, not because she draws comparisons between her china plate and my pewter, but because it is evidently done with a design to wound me." They never let us alone, but would continually force us to join their company, and the agent came constantly to our house, but all at once this intimacy ceased; he came no more; and even tried on various occasions to affront me. As I always wished to live on friendly terms with my neighbours I was much annoyed at the change; and at last I determined to ask him what was the matter. I spoke of it to my wife, but she strongly advised me not, but to let him enjoy his ill humour and vanity as long as he liked. I insisted on knowing why she advised me thus; and as my Augusta could not conceal anything from me, she at last told me that his foolish vanity and self-conceit had given him the idea that my wife's kindness of

manner towards him proceeded from a secret partiality and admiration of his person, and he consequently grievously offended and insulted her by his impertinent attentions. Her anger, disgust, and disdain were most vividly expressed towards him, and she even went so far as to say that she could not pardon such an insult to her delicacy, whether from a prince of the Blood Royal, or from a mere livery servant. I was fully aware then of the full amount of his indignation against her, and that he was in fact our enemy for life. I was even weak enough to say to my wife that I wished she had made use of any other expression, but she replied, "How could I treat him with too much severity when he dared to behave to me in so insulting a manner? I care not if he never forgets it." She sighed deeply, and cast upon me such a look as I had never seen in her before; and I often for some time afterwards remarked a dark cloud on her gentle countenance; for she was deeply wounded that I did not more warmly take up the injury offered to her feelings of delicacy. I saw how wrong I had been, and I resolved as much as possible to repair my fault. I loaded her with caresses, and I strongly felt that I only loved her still more than before; and that I considered myself the happiest of men—too happy, and too secure in her strong affection and dignity of character to care for such a vain and concealed coxcomb. Skinck remained our irreconcilable enemy; my wife rejoiced at it; but I was still secretly annoyed at the speech about the livery, and hated constantly meeting and seeing a person who I was conscious looked upon me with hatred; especially when at any time I was preaching forgiveness of injuries, or the love of our enemies. Had I been in a town I could have moved my residence, but in the village it was impossible. I made one or two attempts to renew civilities, but in vain, and at last the annoyance gradually died away, and I accustomed myself to pass the time by without thinking at all about him.

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Two sons, almost grown up, had, therefore, the sole guardianship of their little sister. Having no restraint, and plenty of money, they gave themselves up to the amusements of their age, and their home was the constant resort of all the young people of the town. Balls, plays, gambling, suppers, succeeded each other night after night, and thus Julia was brought up in the hot-bed of dissipation, without mother or chaperon, with a very determined character by nature, and a most attractive person. Every young libertine of her brothers' acquaintance regarded her as an easy conquest, and she was surrounded by flatterers who spoke to her of love, long before she herself was old enough to understand what the feeling was. She was accustomed to receive the homage of men as a tribute due to her, and delighted in inspiring admiration and passion without ever being in the slightest degree moved herself. She thus became a coquette of the worst species, and at fifteen, with the most brilliant attractions in form, face, and manner, she reigned supreme over her little court at her brothers' house, delighting in tormenting and ruling over her visitors, whilst she herself remained unscathed and heart whole. Every year her desire of fresh conquests increased, and she varied the snares with which she entrapped her followers with an art from which no one could escape. By turns gentle, pouting, full of feeling and romance; or heroic and philosophic; reasonable and serious; or gay and inconsiderate to the utmost excess; she continued to rule over all the variety of characters and dispositions, and played her different parts with equal success and animation. She was soon not satisfied with drawing the young men into her trammels, but made an attack upon all, old or young, whom she might chance to meet. Her coquetry also extended itself to the female sex. She succeeded in making herself universally adored, and this was the sole object of her life. Although her reputation became much blown upon, several men were very desirous of marrying her; and though she refused them all, they still continued her devoted admirers. Not one of her slaves escaped, but every fresh student of the university at once succumbed under her yoke. She gave it out that she would never marry till she met with some man of such exalted rank and fortune as would indemnify her for the loss of her liberty. Her friends thought she had cast her eyes on the young Count of Klénan, who, like all the others, had joined her triumphant circle, but who was still dependent on an aged parent, who would never consent to such a marriage. She never, however, had shown him any very particular attention; but still she humoured him rather more than her other admirers. Whilst I was acting as a tutor, I had often heard Julia Goldman spoken of as a perfect divinity, and I laughed at the enthusiasm of the young fools who thus spoke of her; but without being aware of it I already had a great desire to know her; and one day one of my pupils told me she had desired him to introduce me to her.

I consented; but more out of curiosity than anything else; and said, what can there be so miraculous about her,—a fine skin! bright colouring! beautiful brilliant eyes! and a fine figure! with the freshness of youth! I have but to think what she will be thirty years hence; to imagine the wrinkles that will then disfigure her; and I will go and show that I at least shall be perfectly impregnable. When I entered her drawing room she was surrounded by a crowd of men, whose eyes were fixed upon her with eager attention, while they listened to her witty sallies. On perceiving me, she advanced a few steps towards me, with peculiar grace, and addressed her words to me in a soft and tender tone. She conducted me into the circle, presented me as a guest, whom she distinguished, and, however occupied she might be with the other men, I always encountered her eyes upon me. Whenever I opened my mouth to speak, she interrupted the general conversation, repeated with more effect my words, asked my opinion, listened with the docility of a child, and approved with a tender and gracious smile. When I took my leave a slight shade of melancholy overspread her features, and she half whispered, “what, so soon?” And when I got into the street, and looked up at the window, I saw her there, and knew she was watching me. I returned home very well pleased with myself, and had never been in any society where I was so much at my ease. Naturally timid, the marked attention of the lovely Julia had encouraged me, and I took my success to be the consequence of that ease, instead of its being caused by her favour towards me; but I was most delighted by Julia having gone to the window to look after me, and from that moment I was as completely in her chains as any man amongst them. After a few days I paid a second visit, and she then received me with an air of pleasure and marked distinction; but evidently as I thought, intended only for me to perceive; in fact, with a sort of ingenuous confidence and retiring modesty. She made some slight protest for calling me into the recess of the window and stood there some minutes conversing with me, and asked me concerning my studies and my native place. There was nothing actually in anything she said; but then the expression of her countenance, which I alone could see; her sweet smile and speaking eye, a slight blush and amiable embarrassment; her lovely figure and graceful movements; her round white arm resting upon the window frame, and the gentle pressure of that pretty hand, tapping mine when she awaited my replies; the attention with which she listened to me, and which was doubly expressive when anything striking escaped me; the annoyed frown and impatient air with which she turned her head when any one spoke loud; all these were proofs that my conversation interested her. I never perhaps had passed any moments so gratifying to my self-love. I entirely lost my timidity, and felt that it was the preference of Julia which gave me this confidence and courage. I

spoke to her with enthusiasm of friendship, although I hardly knew by experience what it meant; I talked with transport of the country, though since my childhood I had never been there. Her eyes filled with tears, she lifted them up to heaven and said—"Oh, the lovely country! happy, a thousand times happy, are those who can live there, and enjoy the green fields!" I spoke with still more ecstasy; her emotion increased more and more; she rested her lovely rosy cheeks on her white hand, her taper finger wiped off a tear which escaped her, as if to conceal from me how much she was moved; and I would have given my existence to have had the privilege of always drying her tears myself. I don't know how she managed, but she contrived to dismiss her guests almost immediately afterwards, and I found myself alone with her. "Thank God they are gone," said she, with a deep sigh; I prepared to depart also, seeing her draw her hand across her forehead with a suffering air; but she told me that a little quiet converse would do her good, and so I remained. We resumed our favourite subject—the beauties of nature, and the charms of solitude and friendship; she spoke with fervour, innocence, and simplicity, and said, with the greatest naïveté, "such a life with one who possesses the same tastes as myself"—she stopped in soft confusion. I listened to her as if she had been an angel promising me seraphic happiness. I took her hand and pressed it to my lips, she gently withdrew it, blushing deeply, but with a kindly smile, and putting it again to her forehead complained much of her head-ache. I told her that great relief was often obtained by squeezing it tightly; she did so, but laughed at the little power she had in her fingers. I offered to lay my hand upon it, and she leant down her beautiful head whilst I placed both my hands on her temples, and felt my own heart much more agitated than the temples whose throbbing I essayed to quiet. She told me it was of no use, and I advised her to apply a wet handkerchief; she thanked me sweetly, and said it would be delightful to be used by me. I became more and more in love, and know not how far my folly might have carried me, when she suddenly threw aside the bandage and told me she was all but well. She appeared not to perceive my emotion, and I presently after took my leave, as deeply in love as it was possible to be. I dreamed of her all night, and flattered myself that my passionate admiration was perceived and returned. Every day I came back to my Julia, and every day the happy illusion was confirmed. She turned aside her eyes when I spoke, but they followed me whenever I moved away from her. Constantly little words escaped from her, which covered her with confusion, and in fact the artful Julia played her part to perfection. I became the victim of a cold-blooded, selfish creature, who laughed at her triumph, and enjoyed seeing me in her toils. I would have given the world to obtain another tête à tête with her; but excepting a few allusions and enigmatical words which she

could hardly fail to have comprehended, she never gave me an opportunity of declaring my attachment, but I felt sure the depth of my passion, my sincerity, and my tears would be appreciated and returned. Nevertheless, I could not get a favourable moment to speak to her; for even if I remained to the last, she always found some pretence for quitting the room, and always came back with some servant or one of her brothers. I knew she had the reputation of being a dreadful coquette, and had I allowed myself to judge of her by her conduct to other men, I should have seen that all were equally certain of success, and satisfied with her attention to them. I did one day venture to say so to her, when I got her into a corner of the room. "Ah, Julia, how guilty would you be if you were only playing with my feelings,—if you were merely giving way to an abominable coquetry." I startled her; she was embarrassed, and stammered I knew not what. I continued—"Is it then true, Julia, that you wish to be adored by every one, whilst you yourself are incapable of feeling any attachment?" "I confess," said she, casting down her eyes, "people might think so, and I know that I have the reputation of it; but what can I do? can I say to one, you are so dull you give me the vapours; to another, you are such a pedant, you kill me with ennui; to a third, you have no brains, &c. &c.? Ought I to send away my brothers' friends, and deprive them of the companions they like, because these gentlemen are so foolish as to pay their homage to me? Oh no, dear Bemrode, these insignificant butterflies fly round their favourite flower, showing off their fine colours, and that is all they care about; but", added she, with an accent and look of real feeling, and gently pressing my hand,—“believe me, I can appreciate true worth, and return true attachment, and know what suits my own heart.” I took this for an avowal, and would have willingly cast myself at her feet. I could hardly contain my transports. I retired, fully persuaded of her preference, filled with pride, and repeated to myself “I can appreciate true worth, and know what suits my own heart.” I am the happy man, chosen and distinguished by the most lovely of women. I became more confident and assiduous than ever, and she kept up her game sufficiently to nourish my pride and feed my love, and thus a year passed by in this illusion of happiness; but still nothing either realised or destroyed my hopes. I in vain sought for her motives in my knowledge of the human heart, and endeavoured to find out what was best for me to do to bring her to the point. It is quite clear she loves me, thought I; everything proves it: perhaps she is afraid of losing her command of me, and thus she feigns a coquetry which is foreign to her. I will try what jealousy will effect. For some days I made my visits very short and less frequent; I took care to speak with admiration of one of the prettiest girls in the town; I put on an absent air whenever addressed me, and hardly answered her when she spoke.

and I even affected not to look at her. I felt convinced I had completely succeeded; for Julia no longer dissembled her anxiety, or her tenderness; her eyes often filled with tears, and she turned away from the flatteries of my rivals with as much real distraction, I thought, as mine was put on. When she spoke to me her voice trembled; her eyes followed me, and she seemed to wish to avoid every one else; in short, no pains on her part were spared to bring me back, and I was only too glad to be caught again. Thus does the skilful spider draw the silly fly into her net, carefully watch his every movement, and when she sees the least effort to escape she springs upon him, throws her meshes over him afresh, and prevents the possibility of his getting out of her clutches. Proud of the success of my plan, I returned to Julia more impassioned and more submissive than ever. I entreated earnestly for half an hour's private conversation. "Ungrateful man!" said she, "do you not perceive that I am as anxious as yourself? but prudence forbids it; we must avoid suspicion. You must wait till the proper time comes." I kissed her hand with rapture, said nothing more that evening, but I went out with three or four other young men who already had their hats and canes in their hands. I knew the way to Julia's boudoir, and I slipped into it. This will avoid all suspicion, thought I, and that is all she asked. At the end of the apartment was an alcove, across which a curtain was drawn. I never dreamt of looking behind the curtain, but I presently heard the door of the dining-room open, the adieux of several of the company, and the footsteps of Julia approaching. My agitation became extreme, she was speaking to her eldest brother. What was to become of me? for instead of wishing her good night, he said—"Julia, I wish to speak to you in your own room." I had nothing to do but rush behind the curtain into the alcove, which proved the bed-room of Julia. The reader may laugh at my confusion as much as he pleases, my mind was only filled with the truest sentiments of respect and adoration for my Julia, and I inwardly prayed with fervour that our attachment might be blessed, and a happy termination be granted to our engagement. During this silent invocation the brother and sister entered. The conversation continued, and in spite of myself I was obliged to listen. "I tell you, Julia," said he, with warmth, "you go too far, and amuse yourself too openly with these young coxcombs." Julia burst out laughing, and said in a tone more vulgar than I had ever heard from her, "Faith, it is their own fault; you men are such fools, we can do anything we like with you, if we do but flatter your self-love. But don't disturb yourself, brother, my views are much deeper than you imagine. Only wait till the old baron is dead, and the very next day I am ready to marry his goose of a son." "But suppose he lives for many years?" "Oh, he won't live; besides I might fall back upon Frinzee. I might have him whenever I pleased." "Yes, unless

he saw through you before; and unless all your lovers saw through you. Think well, Julia, you are now two-and-twenty, and it is time to think of establishing yourself, instead of making more dupes; that young parson, for instance, that Bemrode, with whom you are flirting so, what do you mean to do with him?" Oh, thought I, with emotion, my poor, dear Julia, how will you get out of this scrape! you will be obliged to reveal your secret; and I listened with breathless attention, expecting to hear either a timid avowal or an evasive and trembling answer. "Who," said Julia, in an unmoved tone, and with redoubled laughter, "what that great fool, Bemrode? Why he amuses me most of all; he has such a wonderful opinion of himself; and it was such fun to catch him. I had heard before I ever saw him that he prided himself upon his deep knowledge of the human heart, and that he was utterly unknowing in the ways of the world, except what he had gathered from his books, so I got introduced to him, and determined to see if I could not humbug him. At first I had some little trouble, not to make him in love with me, for that he was the very first day, merely by flattering his vanity; but it was harder work to convince him that he was so; and, to give him courage to propose, I talked to him about the country, the woods, the streams, the heavens, the stars, the moon; I shed tears. I pressed his hand, and every moment he became more and more deeply smitten, but he was so gauche. At last one fine day I dismissed all the rest of the company on the plea of headache, and if you had but seen him trying to press my temples, and bind my head with his pocket handkerchief. Oh his look at me! and his great goggle eyes, when I suddenly threw off the bandage, I shall never forget it! From that day he thought me desperately in love with him; and nothing amuses me so much as to maintain him in this error, for I have nothing in the world to do but to play my pastoral part, to look at him tenderly, to sigh when I am more inclined to laugh, and to lead as I will this great decipherer of human motives and human actions; who, nevertheless, is well aware that I play with all men as I choose. for I was forced one day to acknowledge it, when he rather took me aback by accusing me of coquetry, but I soon resumed my equanimity, by perceiving that, at least, he had not discovered that he was the greatest dupe among the lot. Oh do let me have a little more fun with this original, for if I have appeared rather more tender towards him the last few days, it is not that I care the least in the world for him, but because he thought to make his escape from me. At this moment he is more submissive, amorous, and confident than ever; he is tormenting me for a private interview to make his proposals in form, and I must hear what he has to say—it will be glorious; and I shall have the gratification of giving him a lesson. He who knows men so well, it is right that he should know something of women also."

Her insulting laugh began again. The reader may imagine the rage, shame, contempt, and spite I felt during this conversation, and the horrible dread I was in lest I should be discovered in my hiding place. The brother and sister still continued to converse in the same tone. At last they separated; Julia was alone, and my agony increased as I felt I must be found out. She approached her mirror, took off her head dress, let down her beautiful hair, and looked more enchanting than ever; but the more her natural charms embellished her, the more her false heart filled me with horror. I thought I saw Lucifer under the form of an angel, and my only desire was to get away from her as far and as fast as I could. She took up her light and came singing into the alcove, I summoned up all my courage. She drew aside the curtain, saw me, and, uttering a loud scream, drew back exclaiming, "Bemrode! good heavens! what brings you here?" "I only came to acquire a knowledge of the hearts of women," replied I, "and I have obtained my lesson, I thank you for it," I said, with a low bow, at the same time opening the door of the apartment. She was so completely taken by surprise that she let me escape without a single word; but she directly followed me, her candle in her hand; and when I reached the bottom of the stair case, I again turned round and made her a low bow. "Good night, dear Bemrode," said she, with a smile, "adieu, till to-morrow." I opened the house door without reply, she shut it after me, drew the bolt, and thus terminated my infatuation for the beautiful Julia.

CHAPTER X.

THE VISIT.

Full sixteen years after I had taken possession of my living, I was late one summer evening walking up and down my room, expecting my family to come in, who had been busily engaged in gathering fruit, a knock at the door startled me, and I thought it must be one of the villagers who wanted to see me. I said "come in," and I saw before me a woman in a long black cloak, with a dirty coarse cloth bonnet, a very common-looking personage altogether; but it was so dark I could not distinguish her features. "What is your business?" said I. "Oh dear sir," said she, with a half Flemish and half Saxon accent, "I have come from a great distance; my home was at Hanau; but my husband is dead and left his affairs in great disorder; he left me with a son in wretched poverty, and I am now on my way to Halberstat to join my brother; but, Rev. sir, I have not one farthing in the world." I put my hand into my pocket with the intention of re-

lieving her. "From Hanau to Halberstat," said I, "why, you are out of your road." "Perhaps so, I came on foot, and I am not well acquainted with the road. I stopped at the Inn called the Crozier in passing through the village, and hearing that you were the Vicar, I thought, my dear Mr. Bemrode, I should like to come and see you. Is it possible you do not remember me?" "No," said I, "not at all; I do not know that I ever saw you; what is your name?" "My maiden name was Goldman." This did not enlighten me, for I had never thought of Julia but as the beautiful Julia; her family name was quite effaced from my memory. "Goldman," said I, trying to recall my ideas. "Yes, Julia Goldman; surely you cannot have forgotten Julia." I was thunderstruck, and in one moment all the whole period of our separation seemed to have vanished away. I could recall to myself nothing but the image of the fascinating Julia, with her light in her hand, advancing towards the alcove where I was concealed, her hair about her shoulder in all the blaze of her youth, pride, and beauty; and before me stood the coarse figure, in her long black mantle, hideous bonnet, and close cut hair. "Good heavens! Julia Goldman!" said I, almost expecting this apparition to vanish and leave behind the Julia of former days! but at that moment our old Mary entered with the lights, which, falling directly upon her, I could hardly restrain a cry of surprise and almost terror. Not one feature was there to recall what she had been. Her complexion, once so fair, was yellow and tanned, and, as it were, stretched over the bony features; her sunk hollow eyes stared in a vacant sort of manner; her aquiline nose, which we all used to admire so much, appeared horridly long, and gave her countenance an expression of harshness and boldness; the pearls of her mouth had disappeared, or were anything but pearls. Her gross looking figure, her uncovered hands, all shocked me; but what struck me most of all was an enormous dirty man's shoe, which I saw under her short round petticoats, and I contrasted it sadly with the beautiful little embroidered satin slipper, which I used to admire so much. Such a sad reverse extinguished all remains of hatred in my breast; I felt only sadness and compassion. "Julia Goldman!" said I, with an accent of the most tender pity. "Aye, Julia Goldman," she repeated, affecting a tone of levity, but nevertheless stepping back into the darkest corner of the room, "you did not expect to see me again, my dear Bemrode, and especially under such altered circumstances. I have suffered a good deal," said she, assuming a plaintive tone. "My husband had a situation at Hanau, but he died destitute and ruined. After his death, having absolutely nothing left, I determined I would go to my brother, but I am now perfectly penniless;" and indeed her whole appearance proved it. I was silent, I could not speak; my heart was oppressed; and I did not even dare to look at
 or. Absorbed in the memory of the past a thousand confused

and painful recollections crowded upon me. "Will you then do nothing for your old friend, dear Bemrode?" said she. The word friend forcibly recalled to my mind the scene behind the curtain; but I lifted up my eyes towards her, and told her she should rest herself some days at our house, and that I expected my wife every moment. "Oh, no, no," cried she vehemently, "that is impossible!" Her refusal, and the manner of it, touched me much. "Why not?" said I. "Oh, no, no, I could not show myself dressed in this manner. Give me a trifle to help me on, it is all I require." I gave her all the money I had in the house. She took it greedily, and quickly retired, thinking she heard footsteps on the stairs. It was my wife. I had given her every particular of my adventure with Julia, and I at once told her who it was whom she had met, and how deeply affected I felt by seeing the poor creature in such a condition. At that moment I would have given her almost anything, and I foolishly expected my wife to enter into and partake of my excited feelings. I was then quite taken aback, when she said with the greatest coldness, "she is justly punished for her wickedness and vile coquetry; I don't feel the least pity for her." I was quite dumb founded. I did not know my Augusta. It is true she was always of a very calm temperament, and not inclined to be led away by exciting scenes; but she was always tender and compassionate, and I really felt quite indignant—but I was wrong; I forgot that Augusta was a woman, and my wife, and that she knew nothing of Julia except her perfidious conduct to me, and how much I had been caught by her; she had not seen her either in her former brilliancy or her present misery, and it was natural that she should judge more coolly than I; but I was unjust towards her, and reprimanded her sharply for her harshness. "Augusta," I said, "your heart is like a flint." She looked at me astonished, and left the room, saying, "supper was just ready." I remained behind a few moments to recover my equanimity, though I could not quite get over my spleen against my wife. I found her at her large family chest, occupied in packing up a bundle of linen and other things. "I think," said she, as I came in, "that that poor woman is in want of clothes, we will send her some." I went up to her, pressed her hand, and examined her packages; every thing in it was very good, but plain and coarse. I had still the beautiful Julia so fresh in my imagination, that I should have been glad if the things had been more elegant and becoming a lady, but I did not dare to express it, particularly as my wife herself was always most simply dressed. But there was one article which did most particularly annoy me to think of, and that was the hideous man's shoe; it was continually before my eyes, contrasted with the embroidered satin slipper, and I did say, "my dearest Augusta, will you, like a kind creature, just put into your bundle a pair of your prettiest slip-

pers. "If you could only have seen those she used to wear, and those she has now, it must be impossible for her to walk in them." My children were looking on, all curiosity; I briefly narrated to them something of the history of the unhappy woman, and said, "think of the dreadful change, and so beautiful, so brilliant, so surrounded by admirers, like a queen in the midst of her court, and now obliged to beg her bread through Germany, with the coarse heavy shoes of a man." My voice faltered, so that even my wife was touched, she reopened her packet and added two chemises of fine linen, and all the money she possessed; but all my eloquence did not prevail on her to add any slippers, for she coolly observed, that if people were compelled to walk, strong shoes would be much more useful. Our maid was then sent off to the inn with the bundle. Julia received it without a word, or sending back any acknowledgment; but the next morning I got a note which perfectly confounded me; it was on a piece of greasy, dirty paper, and a dreadful scrawl. Instead of testifying any gratitude for our present, she asked for more, and threatened to inform my wife of our former intimacy. From that moment my pity vanished; anger and contempt succeeded; I looked upon her as a mere audacious mendicant, and I sent her word she had better quit the village directly. She did so, and for some time I heard no more of her; till about a month or two afterwards I was surprised to see her appear very respectably dressed in the castle pew. She had been engaged as housekeeper to the agent, and I heard also all her intermediate history, from the time I first lost sight of her. After having played with the feelings of so many men, she at last found one who proved her match, and acquired over her that command which she had so long exercised over others. He was a libertine, unprincipled, and vulgar; he piqued her vanity, played with her affections, and actually got hold of her heart, which had before seemed so invulnerable; she was caught in her own trap; seduced by the villain, who boasted of his triumph, so as to leave no doubt of her fall; and from that moment Julia sank from a divinity, worshipped by all men, to a mere puppet, who was treated with familiarity and contempt. All who had ever had serious intentions towards her, at once retired, and her court daily diminished. Accustomed to the society of men, she could not do without it, and thought to retain them by her complaisance. She daily became more and more blown upon, and degraded, and any hope of a really respectable connection was at an end; but still she resolved to marry, and made use of all her wiles and art to effect it, but the prestige was destroyed. Grief, rage, and her mode of life, destroyed her freshness, her charms, and her hopes. All the attractions, the happiness, and the projects of this ambitious girl vanished, and her father's fortune was swallowed up in his experiments; so that at death Julia found herself destitute and forsaken. She suddenly

disappeared, was absent for several years, and no one knew what had become of her. She as suddenly reappeared, with a son of twelve years old, calling herself the widow of a public officer. Her boy was very handsome, but very vicious, and always laughed when she was spoken of as a widow, and, in short, the truth of her story was never ascertained. She did not go to her brother; but, as I have before stated, took the situation of housekeeper at the castle. "She deserves no pity, indeed," said I, to my wife, when I showed her the note that I had received. "No," said she, "but she was in need of our help, and had I seen this note yesterday I would still have sent her the clothing. What were you and Charles reading yesterday," said she, "in one of your heathen authors? it was almost as true as if it had been taken from the Bible." "It was from Aristotle," said I, "and the sentiments are really scriptural; 'it is better to suffer injustice than to be unjust.'" "And may we not also say," said she, "it is better to be destitute oneself than not to succour the unfortunate?" "Surely so, my dearest Augusta, and we may say so without blushing." "Well," said she, laughing, "we certainly may have a conscience clear on this subject to-day, for I actually put in the bundle every farthing we had except your gold coins." Now these coins were about a dozen gold ducats, of very old date, which had been given to me by my father-in-law, and which I always had kept in reserve for any very pressing occasion. "Excellent woman," said I, "you will see we shall be no worse off to-morrow, unless some chance visitor should happen to come, for I also gave all the money I had by me." "Mine had been intended to purchase a new hat for Elizabeth," said she, "but she will do without it." "Oh, she will be much happier," replied I, "our good Eliza will think so, I am sure; and this very note proves how miserable the wretched woman must be." My wife pressed my hand, and we returned to the room where the children were sitting. Charles happened to be reading in Plutarch, the passage where Diogenes was asked in what manner he would revenge an injury? by striving to become still more virtuous, and heaping benefits on my enemies, he replied. "Read that once more," said I. He did so. I looked at my wife, she smiled, and understood me.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MENDICANT.

About an hour after this conversation, which I wrote down that I might not forget it, a man, with a most comfortable great coat, came into my court yard. I was in the general sitting room,

with my family, and was going out to ask his business, when he knocked at the door, and walked in. He had not spoken two words before I comprehended that he had come to ask assistance. I was dreadfully annoyed to be obliged to tell him I had not a single penny. A glance at my wife gave me courage, and especially as the man, from his appearance, really did seem far better off than myself; in fact, his clothing was really very superior. He looked at all my children, and then presented his request, which was for a small sum of money. I looked at his comfortable coat and felt my heart as hard as a stone. "Sir," said I, "I think, with your appearance, I should be ashamed to ask charity from a man who you cannot suppose can be very rich; I assure you, too, I have it not in my power, and, moreover, I should not think it right." "My dress," said he, in a mild tone, and without appearing the least offended, "is really that which ought to excite your compassion, for with such a dress you may imagine how sad it must be for me to become a beggar." This address at once touched my heart, and melted it like a warm shower on the ice of winter. I saw my wife also overcome, and that she had begged the poor man to be seated. I thought how I could make him amends for my harshness, and felt that women have much more tact and delicacy than men; but still I had no money, and what could I do? "My very dress, sir," repeated he, "proves to you how much I am to be pitied. I have known happier days, but misfortune has overtaken me, and oh how cruel it is when one is forced to resort to charity. Believe me, dear sir, the hardest of all trials is to feel oneself exposed to contempt." Mina, my second daughter, and all the younger children, who had been staring at him with curiosity, turned away their eyes and blushed with confusion; Elizabeth, on the contrary, my eldest daughter, who was of a most timid disposition, and who had withdrawn into a corner of the room to hide her tears, whilst I spoke so roughly, now advanced towards him with an air of the kindest interest, as if to prove to him that his misfortunes did not excite any contempt. "My harshness," said I, in a broken voice, "was not from my heart; a sad necessity obliges me to refuse you even a trifling assistance, for we have not really one six-pence in the house." "No," said my wife, "for we gave every penny yesterday to a miserable woman." The emotion of the poor man was very apparent, he walked up and down, wiped his eyes, and then said, with a low bow, "I ask you a thousand pardons, for putting you to the pain of refusing me." My wife asked him to stop and breakfast, which, after some hesitation, he agreed to. The children, full of impatience to show their sympathy, all ran out and fetched in something; and we quickly sat down to our repast. The stranger cried out, in seeing their activity, "what angelic little beings they are." When we had finished our meal, he said he was in haste to

continue his journey, and that he should take with him wherever he went the remembrance of our kindness, and the sweet children who had shown so much feeling towards him. My wife begged him to wait one moment. She cast a significant look at me, and went to the drawer which contained the box of old coins. The children clapped their hands for they well understood what she was about, and said, "quite right, mamma." She took out one of the ducats and gracefully presented it to the stranger, with a charm peculiarly her own. He hesitated. "Oh take it," she cried, seeing that he still paused, and all the children joined in their little voices. Elizabeth took his hand, and said, in the most touching manner, "do not refuse us; do not let us think you were pained by our first reception of you." He took the ducat and bowed in silence; but that silence was more expressive than anything he could have uttered.

CHAPTER XII.

MY FAMILY.

When the stranger spoke so feelingly of the misery of poverty, he was quite right; and I had more than once felt it so myself. My cure was a very small one, and brought me in but little. In the first years of our married life, indeed, I found it quite sufficient. I jumped for joy almost when St. Silvester's day arrived, and all my debts were paid, with a little stock left over to enable me to buy a ribbon, a cap, or some trifle for my Augusta, which I seldom failed to be able to do. Let not the rich laugh; I owed nothing—I could present a gift to my wife—I was as rich as they. For three years every thing was most prosperous; on the fourth all things went badly; and on St. Silvester's day that year, instead of rejoicing, I had the misfortune not only to have no surplus, but also to have a debt of twenty crowns. I would not have told my wife if I could have helped it; but as she kept the books it was impossible to hide it from her. I had my little present for her, but I did not dare to give it. I found her seated with her head on her hand, in a most melancholy attitude; not weeping—but with a most anxious expression of countenance—nursing our little Charles, who was then at the breast. "My dear," said she, "we have nothing left this year," in a most melancholy voice. I took our eldest daughter Elizabeth in my arms, and said, "yes, dear one, we have; our dear children and our fond attachment to each other; and what do we want more?" My wife's tears fell on the cheek of the infant; I knelt down beside her, with Elizabeth still in my arms, and thanked God for all his mercies. Augusta extended her hands towards me, lifted

them to heaven with an expression of maternal tenderness and pride which I shall never forget. I thought her more beautiful at that moment than I had ever seen her before, even on the day when she pledged me her faith at the altar. Our rigid economy increased still more; we kept up the most perfect appearance of respectability, and without diminishing any thing really requisite, we saved in a hundred little matters. I would not torment the reader with the details, as they would appear frivolous and tiresome on paper, but in reality they were most charming, for we knew actually how to change them into pleasures. We made it quite a fete day whenever my wife put on a new gown: it was the same with myself and my children, whenever we had a new garment; and when, without any help, I had dug, prepared, and sown my little garden, I thought that what I saved by my industry I might fairly employ in my new year's gift, and enjoyed, beforehand, the pleasure I should confer. When the day arrived I arranged my children in steps, according to their age, and said to their mother, "Behold our treasures!" It was, indeed, a scene of real happiness and delight. In nine years we had six children. Heaven knows how Augusta contrived to dress them and ourselves comfortably and neatly, and to feed us all heartily. But I have always said, maternal love can perform miracles. When my poor father-in-law died our circumstances became much more easy, and I put in reserve the old ducats for any pressing case of need, or to assist me from time to time in bringing up my children. We lived so retired, that we were almost as if in an unknown island. All our neighbours were so much richer than we were, that we could not pretend to compete with them, therefore declined an intercourse which would have led us to expense beyond our means. Neither could we afford to place our children at school. I took their education upon myself, and at least I entered into it with the zeal and affection of a most tender parent. I had but few books, and those were chiefly classics; neither had I any means to procure others. What I had, I had read a hundred times over; my wife even knew them almost by heart. In the winter evenings, whilst she was at her work, I used to translate them into German for her. I had learnt English at the University, and I had a few good works in that language; I also knew French, but possessed only a single volume in that language, therefore I had almost forgotten it. My brother-in-law, the paper manufacturer, always brought me, every year, from Leipsic, the catalogue of the books which were sold at the great fair, and from time to time a few newspapers, so that I did get some little insight into the progress of modern literature. Whenever I saw these catalogues my old desire for composing myself revived, and for some days I could think and speak of nothing else. Our German literature consisted of Göt-
t and the first volume of Klopstock. We read and reread them

with a delight which would have enchanted their authors, could they only have witnessed it. When in our catalogues we saw the names of Gesner, Mendelshom, and various others cited as stars of the first magnitude in the literary firmament, I saw the eyes of my children sparkle with desire to know their works, and I used to feel quite sad that I was unable to procure them the pleasure of reading them. Ever since the death of my friend, the brazier, whom I very soon got reconciled with, I had no acquaintance in the town. All my friends, the neighbouring clergy, had nothing but books on theology, so at length I determined never to speak to my children of that which was beyond their reach, and to collect all the scraps I could for my own private reading, which were generally loose sheets which were packed round the Bibles and Prayer Books which I procured for my parish. My children enjoyed reading with a passion which they seemed to have imbibed from me. The three elder ones had read over my little library so often, that really the books were all but mere rags for the younger ones; but the good memory of the dear children supplied the deficiency; and that which enchanted me most about them was their complete union; their love for each other was more than fraternal; perhaps it was from the example of their parents—perhaps because they had no other companions. The winter was our principal time for study. My wife desired that our girls should take lessons with their brothers, “not perhaps,” said she, “that it may be very useful to them, as all they will require is to learn to be good daughters and useful wives; but I wish the dear children to be united together in every thing, and that they may love each other all the better for it.” I thought it a queer notion of my wife’s—though I indulged it; especially when I saw Charles so desirous, in his first English lesson, to make Elizabeth a partaker of it; and when I afterwards heard the dear children congratulating each other on knowing the same things, I was as pleased as they were. But when the three elder ones requested that the little ones might also form part of the English class, I objected, because I had but one edition of Hume, which was our chief text book, and I said the book would not last out with so much using. But the zeal of my scholars soon found a remedy; they made complete copies, writing it out by turns; and this exercise really gave them a most perfect knowledge of the language, so much the more as they took a pride in showing that their mother’s wish was right, and their own desires reasonable. An odd volume or two of the *Spectator* were in like manner copied, and at last known by heart; and about a dozen excellent works which I possessed, in English, were quite familiar to them. My wife instructed them in music. Her talent had been constantly cultivated from the time of our marriage, but without ever interrupting her household duties, or her attention to her children. She usually sat up an hour later, and rose an hour

earlier, to have time to practise. She played with the most perfect taste and time, and with an expression seldom to be met with: and her singing, when she played impromptu—which she was generally obliged to do, from possessing so little music—was perfect, the slow and melancholy being that which she chiefly preferred. Elizabeth and Charles both made progress, and my fourth child also excelled. Mina, Louis, and Wilhelm, after many attempts, gave it up. After the English lesson, I used to retire to my study with the boys, to instruct them in the dead languages; necessity obliged me to adopt the same method as for English, namely, to make them write out copies of my works, and it succeeded so well, and so thoroughly engraved the lessons on their memories, that they had not half the trouble in learning that other boys have. My little girls, after some time, petitioned to be admitted into the study whilst the Latin and Greek lessons of their brothers were going on, and my wife also pressed hard their petition. After many refusals I at length consented, and I had no reason to repent of it. The girls listened with pleasure—but nothing escaped them; if their brothers made a mistake or pronounced badly, they would laugh—and thus oblige them, as it were, to pay more attention. They often, also, asked them to explain some passage, and they never liked to appear to their sisters ignorant. Charles read well, but slow, and with rather a pedantic air. Mina called him the school-master, and Charles took pains to read with grace. Louis hesitated and stammered, the gentle Elizabeth told him she could not understand him, and Louis soon read more correctly. Do tell us some of those pretty fables of Phœdrus, said Annette to little Wilhelm, and Wilhelm quite proud of having something to teach, hastened to learn them, and wrote them out that he might be able to repeat them to his sister. My daughters used to sit and work, either at their spinning wheels, their knitting, or their sewing. Mina, the second, was full of fun, and always had some little joke going on. The boys persuaded their sisters to make translations with them, and two hours in the evening, once a week, were set apart for this purpose. This produced a spirit of emulation which was most useful in forming their style and drawing out their minds. Each had their peculiar taste and manner, and all we had to do was to keep their ardour within bounds. I was really surprised myself to see how these young folks educated one another; in fact, they were full of talent, and had acquired information very much beyond their age, and that without ever leaving their native village or their father's roof, and their mother and I were really proud of them and delighted in watching their happiness and their innocent enjoyment. No one can imagine the delightful evenings we used to spend when seated round the table, after a light repast of fruit: each read by turns his little translation—the girls in the modern languages, the boys in the classics; each

enjoyed the success of the other, and no feeling of envy ever intruded itself. I used generally to finish the evening with some instructive lecture on the different subjects they had been engaged in, which led to further conversation, and these conversations seemed more fully to develop the different characters of my children. Elizabeth, the eldest girl, was exceedingly amiable and tender-hearted. A benevolent trait, or an anecdote of fraternal or filial love, always drew forth her tears, and fed her natural tendency to melancholy. Mina used to say of her, she never could enjoy any thing without weeping, and her description really was not far from the truth. The subjects she chose for her exercises were always serious. Sophocles was her great favourite, because he said, "that the greatest happiness of man consisted in his being mortal;" and Pindar she thought the first of poets, because he said, "life is but a dream and a shadow," which she considered a sublime thought. "You call life nothing," said Mina—"I think it is very delightful; and as for man being a shadow, I think he is something very substantial; and I know I feel myself to be something." "Oh, Mina," said her sister, "life is indeed nothing but a vale of tears, suffering, care, vain labours, sacrifices, and grief, ending with old age, which is too often despised, and the tomb, where one is soon forgotten." Well," said Mina, "I think life exceedingly agreeable and pleasant, all except the old age, which is a good way off, and the dark grave, which I do not like to think about." Charles resembled his sister Elizabeth, though more free and energetic. He liked reading about the Spartans; and every thing that partook of austere virtue, especially Socrates and Diogenes. His sober tastes always provoked the laughter of Mina, but never with illnature or sharpness. Elizabeth was the universal favourite; but Mina, with her round face, little turned-up nose, and merry eyes, always amused and animated us. She and her sister, though so different in character, were inseparable. Louis was rather like Mina, and always loved his joke. He used to call his sisters Heraclitus and Democritus. Necessity had compelled me to have so much recourse to the ancient writers in my system of education, but I cannot help thinking the noble sentiments and fine examples which they contain might often be very usefully employed. My younger children were very much like the elder ones. Annette was surnamed the Sage, and Wilhelm, Alexander the Great. Such was our course of life: in the spring and summer our labours in the garden rather took the place of our studies; but still we sometimes reposed in an arbour, and amused ourselves with our books. I occasionally used to lament my poor children knew so little of modern literature; but my wife used to say, "My dear husband, do let them be happy in what they do know; what can they require more?" I replied, "Almost every thing. Why, when I read the lists in the cata-

logues of the fair at Leipsic, of the hundreds of works composed solely for the young, I feel quite wretched. Think of the progress that has been made in every science—natural history, botany, mineralogy! Oh, how many things there are these poor children are totally ignorant of!" "Well, dear friend," said Augusta, "what great harm is it, even if they do not know the plants that grow in America, which country they are not the least likely ever to see; or where the precious stones come from, which they are sure never to possess? I trust, dear one, that they will always know and appreciate the true gems, virtue, uprightness, and a keen sense of honour and duty." "But," replied I, "surely you would like them to have some little idea of anatomy, the nerves and muscles of the human body, and the nature and constitution of man." "They have a very fair knowledge of the human heart, my dear; they themselves possess honest, simple, and true ones, and that is all I care about." "Ah, my dear wife, that is the very thing! I lament you are in error there, for it is a science that I have made my very particular study; but even that alters with the times; and the nature of man undergoes as great variations as kingdoms, nations, and the world itself. In all the modern books I see nothing so much thought of as philosophic romances, moral tales, and the secret history of the heart. Who knows the fate that may await our daughters; or who they may one day marry; and I often think what they may lose by not having the power of pursuing their studies. And besides, in less than a year, they will know by heart every book that I possess." "Well," said my wife, "if you think it is so absolutely essential for them, why do you not make use of the little store of medals and coins that my dear father gave you? you could not employ it better. Go to the city, look out for yourself, and bring back what you think most desirable."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LIBRARIAN.

In the evening, when we were all assembled, I astonished my dear children by informing them that there were thousands of books beyond those which I possessed; in fact, that new ones were being published every day, and that literature was an inexhaustible mine. I then told them that their mother and I had resolved to devote our little treasure to the purchase of some of these valuable works for the improvement and culture of their minds; that I should start off the next morning and select the best I could procure for them. Their eyes sparkled with joy, they brought me the box which contained our treasure, and

which had never been touched except for the mendicant before spoken of. We thought the whole might be worth about fifty crowns, and with this sum I reckoned I could purchase books enough to last them many years. "We will read them with the utmost care," said I, "and when we have extracted from them all the gold we will sell them and purchase others, and by this means we shall procure ourselves a constant supply. I then produced the last catalogue from the fair at Leipsic, and at all those books, which had rather a curious title, Mina called out "bring that, papa, if you please;" Lewis asked for plays; Charles for poetry; Wilhelm for the history of conquerors, or for travels; and Elizabeth for tragedies. I then took out some older catalogues, and they all called out for the romances, which were notified in them. I myself marked some works on natural history, geography, &c., &c., and the dear children spent the whole evening in the pleasing anticipation of the treat they should have, and looked forward to it with as much delight as other young people would to the most brilliant fetes and assemblies. The girls offered to knit two hours a day extra, to add to the fund. And at break of day I started for the city, where I had not been for many a long year, accompanied by the benedictions of all my family. I was rather puzzled with regard to my choice; I knew from my catalogues the authors who were considered the most celebrated, but I was aware that celebrity is not always the true test of merit, especially as regards morality; I, consequently, pondered a good deal of my journey as to my choice, and much wished that I had possessed a friend capable of advising me. I entered by chance the shop of the most celebrated librarian, and was quite delighted to find myself surrounded by the works of the most celebrated authors; but I could not help feeling mortified that nothing of my own was amongst them. Everything was arranged in alphabetical order, and I felt a considerable sinking of the heart as I stopped at B, and thought of the pride, joy, and delight it would have been could I have seen in large letters Bemrode's Works. I thought of the respect with which all the young shopmen would have looked at me when I told them I am Mr. Bemrode. There were a good many purchasers in the shop, so I had plenty of time to look around me, and then I commenced by asking the price of some prayer books. At that moment a stout, good looking man entered through a side door; he came up to me, shook me warmly by the hand, and said, "welcome, good pastor, to your own home." "My home," said I. "Yes, your home," said he; and then looking round at his well furnished shelves he said, "your home in more respects than one. Are not our first and best writers theologians, philologists, philosophers, and moralists, historians, mathematicians, metaphysicians? do they not all begin with theology? which is, indeed, the basis of all science, even including jurisprudence and medicine. But even

now more than two-thirds of my whole collection consist in works of theology." He then asked me my name, and the name of my parish, and when I said Bemrode and Eizebach, he repeated the words in a very particular manner, and with a most peculiar expression of countenance, he pressed my hand in a still more friendly manner, and begged me to remain and breakfast with him, which invitation I accepted with pleasure. The kind reception I had met with, decided me at once. I found I had lighted upon a friend, so I took out my treasure at once and displayed it before him, and begged him to advise me as to the best works for me to purchase. He took up the old coins and smiling, said, "this is rare money, I must give you merchandize without alloy in exchange. What do you require, orthodoxy, or heterodoxy, or something between the two—neither flesh nor fowl?" "I do not want theology," replied I, "I have mine fixed both in my head and in my heart; and, indeed, the only book I really care about, on that subject, is this," laying my hand upon the Bible. "Ever since I have been in my own little village, I have never found any occasion to enter into scholastic disputes." "You are right, dear pastor, there is a deal of disputing just now about theology, and as for philosophy we might say it has long been asleep, and is now awaking in a very dreamy kind of way; for our philosophers, like all dreamers, have some very wild and incoherent thoughts." "I should like," said I, "to take home with me three or four romances that you can recommend, to form the taste of my children, and give them some notion of the world without hurting the purity of their minds." The bookseller shook his head and made no reply. "I wish also for some works on natural history, geography, and poetry; in short, all those subjects most likely to be useful to a family, who have lived in the greatest seclusion. My little nest egg has long been laid by for a case of need, and I know of no more important one than that of instructing and rendering happy my children." "And are they girls?" said he, with a pensive air. "Three boys and three girls. My wife and I have done the best we could for their education; but our means are limited, and I feel they want the polish of the world, and the advantage of modern literature, though for their ages they certainly are well informed, and thoroughly acquainted with my whole library." "Of what books is it composed?" said the librarian, with a thoughtful air. I named them. He knit his brow with a still more embarrassed air. "Do you mean," said he, "that your children have read all these books from end to end." "Yes, with the exception of about one hundred pages, unfit for them, which I cut out. Had I listened to my wife perhaps I should have taken out still more; but you have not an idea how innocent my children are." "Put up your ducats, dear pastor, and dine with me to-day. I have very shortly to make a journey to Eizebach on business. Meanwhile I will lend you a few volumes to satisfy

the curiosity of your children, and I will pick you out some works of real value, and bring with me when I come. Works in which you will find the deepest knowledge of the human heart; but from which, I much doubt, if your wife will not require you to suppress many pages, and which I should advise you to read over with her before you put them into the hands of the children." He then took me up stairs into a very handsomely furnished room, in which were seated a middle aged lady, and four younger ones. He took from the hands of the youngest a book which she was reading, and, putting it into his pocket, said, "if you want it you will find it in my room," then taking from a glass case three or four volumes magnificently bound, he placed them on a table. The young ladies gazed at me with a bold and disdainful air, which made me feel very uncomfortable, though their uncle presented me to them as a valued friend. We conversed together in the recess of the window, on different subjects of literature and theology. By degrees other persons came in and the conversation became general. When it changed to the modern works I was obliged to keep silent, especially as regarded the theatre, the news of the day, and the fine arts. The young ladies displayed all their talents, and their uncle showed me their drawings, which I thought most masterly; they played on the piano-forte with such skill that I imagined it a new instrument, the style was so totally different from that of my wife and children; they moved their heads, their shoulders, and their whole figures as if it were impossible to produce the proper sound without it, and I thought how excessively difficult it must be. It seemed to me as if my friend was wishing to draw my attention towards them, and to show me the sort of education which I desired to give to my children; but if he thought so he was wrong, for I was very far from wishing to see my dear, simple, good children arrive at such a degree of elegance, assurance, freedom and decision, as these young ladies showed in their opinions and judgments. At dinner the conversation was brilliant and animated, and that I might not appear utterly ignorant, I quoted some verses of Gellert, which appeared to me apropos to the subject under discussion; they smiled, and did not seem to think much of Gellert. My host frowned, and immediately said something kind to me, and turned off my attention, as if to prevent my noticing their want of courtesy to a poor country parson. After dinner he gave me the books I had seen him put aside, renewed his caution to read them first with my wife; and then, taking down from the shelf a large thick volume, he said, "as they know English they will find here plenty to amuse them till I come." It was a work on natural history, full of the most beautiful engravings.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE READING.

My family came some distance to meet me; and I could read in their countenances the anxious impatience with which they awaited my report. I gave them a full account of my visit, and told them the librarian had promised to come and see us. "Oh let us have the books, dear father," they exclaimed, with sparkling eyes. On my journey home I had looked cursorily through them, and saw quite enough to show me that the librarian was right in advising me to read them before giving them to the children. As soon as we reached home I put into their hands the beautiful book of natural history, with its fine engravings. "But the others, dear father; we want to see all." I told them it would be time enough when that one was finished. They begged at least to look at the titles; but I remained firm. They then set to work to read their natural history. The new ideas it imparted to them filled them with interest, and their old favourite, Pliny, was quite at a discount; but the more pleased they were, the more their curiosity was whetted to see the others. When they had gone to bed I took out the books, which were by the most celebrated authors, and, in a low voice, commenced reading them to my wife. Most true it was that the style was most attractive; it had upon me the effect of the most beautiful music, and the interest increased in every page. I quite understood the smile of disdain at my quotation from poor old Gellert. The easy and harmonious language, flowing as rapidly as the author's thoughts; the life, warmth, and precision,—not a word too much. Oh, what a difference to the prosy style of the old writers! We felt ourselves so drawn on by it that we could not quit our book. The passions were painted with such truth and energy. The misfortunes of the hero really seemed as if they were my own, and I was compelled to stop reading, for my tears quite blinded me. Love was described in such glowing colours, that the most icy heart must have been moved, and I laid the book down and exclaimed, "this reading is indeed much too exciting and dangerous to put into the hands of our dear children." To my utter astonishment my wife did not appear to think so, and I continued, after some dissertation with her, till I arrived at a most painful description of a scene of infidelity, her indignation was then roused at once. She could not imagine how the author could possibly undertake to offer excuses on the plea of the weakness of the human heart, and she begged me to put aside the book, and agreed it would never do to permit the young ones to get hold of it. She and I still differed though in our opinions; for I only considered that the author deluged with too much power, but she contended he did not correctly describe, or at all with truth; and we agreed to look at the others the next day, and we still found the same defect.

By the side of the most sublime descriptions of virtue were the most seducing images of vice, so that we were at one moment touched with enthusiasm and delight, and the next horrified and troubled, and yet drawn on by the charm of the style, and the interest of the situations. We, accordingly, looked them all up, confining ourselves to the natural history, and awaiting, with some impatience, the arrival of our librarian. He came at last, and was greeted with a warm welcome. After a few moments he took me aside, and said, "well, what did you think of the books I lent you? did you read them?" I told him that, notwithstanding the undoubted beauty of their style, and their great interest, I had too much concern for the innocence of my children to allow them to peruse them. I also imparted to him my conversation with my wife; he regarded her with a look of interest, seated himself in the midst of the children, and though at first they were rather shy, his kind manner soon put them at their ease, and he drew out their different characters. Elizabeth was the most silent, but her sweet smile spoke volumes, and Mina talked for her and herself too; Charles brought forth various sentences from his favourite authors; and the three younger ones climbed up upon his knees. I hardly knew what to make of him, he seemed quite affected; he constantly embraced the children, and looked at us with an air of great emotion. The conversation soon became general, and the children expressed their sentiments with modesty, and yet with perfect freedom. Elizabeth sat down to the piano, and played several airs with her own variations, and I was surprised to see how pleased our guest appeared, for undoubtedly the instrument I had heard at his house was very superior to ours; and his nieces certainly worked away much harder at it. After a little while he asked to see the garden; our girls then went to look about the dinner; and, after strolling a little while, we sat down in the arbour, he between us, and holding a hand of each, which he pressed with emotion, whilst the tears stood in his eyes. "My dear sir," said I, with great surprise, "what is the matter?" "You are," said he, "a happy father and mother; your children are charming, and deserve all the tenderness you have for them. It is not the first time I have been witness to your affectionate and happy union. You do not remember me, and are little aware that you have been my benefactor. When you were in my shop, the moment I heard your name, and beheld your old ducats, I cannot describe to you how I felt, and how anxious I was to obtain your friendship, and that of your family; but enough of this, for the present. I want some things out of my carriage; he then sent to the inn for it, and produced several bottles of good wine, and a large parcel of books, which he gave the children. "Trust me, dear friend," said he, "they may read them; I knew your taste." "I have no taste," replied I, "except for unsophisticated nature." "And that is the best and truest," said he, putting his

hand on my shoulder; and he then launched forth into the kindest commendations of our children, their talents, their education, their innocence, and the true and genuine taste they displayed. "And now you must know, my good host, that about six months ago, as I was making a little tour with some friends, our carriage broke down in your village, and we were forced to stop at the Crozier Inn; it happened to be quite full, and the people were smoking and enjoying a quiet glass: consequently, the fumes of the tobacco rendered the air of the parlour rather unpleasant. In a corner of the kitchen we perceived a beggar woman and her son, a boy about twelve years old. We were told our carriage would not be properly repaired before the next day. The idea of passing the night in such a close place was very disagreeable to us. We asked what sort of person the vicar was, and felt inclined to ask his hospitality for the night. One of the peasants immediately commenced your praises, and all the rest joined, extolling your kindness, your disinterestedness, your zeal, charity, and warm interest in your people, your tenderness to your family, whom they also described; they added, your means were very small, and one and all spoke of you with the greatest warmth, and lamented you were not better off. Speaking of your large family, but adding that you were also a friend to all in need, we were greatly interested; and the schoolmaster happening to come in, we heard from him the history of your first coming into the parish. This raised our curiosity to be acquainted with you; but we felt we could not put you to the expense of entertaining us. We asked your name, that we might note it down in our tablets. The instant that the schoolmaster pronounced the word Bemrode, the beggar woman started up, and left the room. We heard her ask the way to the vicarage, and saw her proceed thither. Some time after we saw her return, and perceived she had some money; she counted it, and directly ordered a good supper and a private chamber. We concluded you had given it to her, which confirmed the report of your charity. A few moments after a servant maid arrived with a large bundle, which she handed to the woman, who took it and said nothing; she presently after opened it, and I confess, my dear pastor, we then began to doubt a little of your poverty, for we saw a large supply of linen and comfortable clothing, and a little parcel of money, which the woman began to reckon directly. We said it is impossible the parson can be so very poor, if he has a large family, and is able to give such extensive alms. We asked again the amount of your income, and thought it quite out of proportion with your beneficence." "Oh!" exclaimed I, "it was a peculiar case; the beggar was a former acquaintance, whom I had known in better days." And I related something of my former adventures with her. He laughed, and said, "quite right, my dear sir, we should always forgive our mistakes. But, however, do you remember another beggar, who

visited you the following morning, and to whom you gave a gold coin? Perhaps you may recognize it, for there it is." I instantly recollected the harshness with which I had at first repulsed the mendicant, and said, "Oh, I did refuse the man at first, he was so well dressed, and his whole person and appearance so strong and healthy; but he was a very singular man." "Yes, very singular he was, in fact, he was my friend." "Your friend?" "Yes, the friend with whom I was travelling, and he is rather singular; but, nevertheless, a very good man, an author, a poet, and a writer of romances. He travels about in order to study nature, and is very successful. I print his works for him, and am much interested in the success of them. I doubt not that he will make a most interesting description of you; and as I shall make money by it, why I regard you as my benefactor. We thought a long while how it would be possible to introduce ourselves to you in the best manner, and at last my friend hit on the plan which he adopted. When he returned I could hardly make out whether he was most pleased or affected. He showed me your piece of gold; related the details of his visit, which equally affected me, and left the ducat with me to return it to you some day or other, and here it is," said he, "so now put it back again with its companions." "But," said I, "you do not mean really that your friend will put us into his book?" "He is at this very moment doing so," replied he; "and you will be well pleased when you see it, and so shall I, and the public generally. I ought to have sent you back your coin before; but, like too many persons who are not in real need, I allowed the pressure of affairs to make me forget it; in short, I put it off from day to day, but fully intended doing it, when I again should come my rounds. Meanwhile chance brought you to my house, you told me your name, I saw your ducats, and my recollection was vividly brought back to the facts. If I did not at once tell you this before, it was because I also wished to furnish a chapter to my friend's book, and now," said he, laughing, "I have done it."

CHAPTER XV.

THE INVITATION AND THE CONSULTATION.

I shall henceforth call my good friend by his Christian name, Frederic. At home he always went by the name of Uncle Frederic, and he wished all of us to adopt it. He spent a long day with us, which he thoroughly enjoyed; and, before taking his leave, he took my wife and I aside, and begged us to return all the romances which he had lent to us, saying, "My dear Vicar, I have seen enough to be convinced that the mode of educa-

tion you have adopted is most excellent. I am quite enchanted with the information, talents, and perfect innocence of your children. I doubt not, in the course of time, you will find that they will, of themselves, make out many romances for you. Elizabeth, I am sure, has a heart pre-eminently disposed to soft and tender affections; but, take my word for it, that even the very best works of fiction would form a very injurious study to her. All that is to be learnt from them of good, such as correct and elegant tastes, or examples of virtue and heroism, your pupils' own hearts will teach them: in fact, the elder ones already have their minds very fully developed; and as for the younger ones, if they were to take to romance reading, it would only give them fictitious ideas, and replace the true and honest feelings of the heart with morbid and erroneous notions,—so again I say, give me back my romances; the only one I will allow shall be that which will give the history of you and your old ducats. If that should describe your young family as I find them now, it will be perfectly harmless." "What!" said my wife, opening her eyes with a look of extreme astonishment, "you do not mean to say any one would think of writing a book about us!—why, there would be nothing to tell. I often wonder how my husband, who writes down every thing, contrives to make out the pages of his journal." "Because, my dearest Augusta," replied I, "every hour of your life furnishes me with some trait which is most interesting to my feelings, and is a true picture of domestic happiness and virtue; and such pictures, I feel sure, would also interest all feeling and affectionate hearts. If such a book were written, it would not be a romance, for your sentiments are all right and good, and such as I should not fear laying before the eyes of any one. It is true we have not many stirring events to relate"—"And I pray heaven," said Augusta, "that we never may have any of such a nature as to furnish the subject of a romance. It is quite enough for us, if we perform the duties of our station, serving God, and acting up to the dictates of our conscience." "What you have said, dear friend," replied Frederic, "is much better worth printing than any romance; for nothing will suit the public taste, in these sorts of works, but assassinations, poisonings, abductions, and misfortune upon misfortune, and heaven preserve you from ever furnishing such subjects of interest. But there are still some readers who would take a pleasure in the details of a life as simple and unvaried, but as well regulated, as yours is; still, I say, never permit your children to read any romance whatever—till—they also have children of their own." I was so struck with the earnestness of Uncle Frederic, that I immediately called in the elder children, and placing all the romances in his hands, I told them, in a solemn accent, never to read such works, as they were most unfit for them. Elizabeth and Charles at once said, they should never wish to do so. But

Mina looked, with a longing and curious eye, after them, which the good Uncle Frederic was occupied with packing up. I then walked out into the garden with him, and imparted to him the intense desire I had to become known as an author; and told him the titles of a dozen different works that I had meditated, and indeed already prepared for commencing. "Well," said he, laughing, "you have gone a good way, in writing down the titles, for I know some excellent authors who never can fix upon a proper title, and very often their publisher is obliged to do it for them; in fact, the title is very frequently that which sells the book; but, my good friend, don't imagine that the trade of an author is a happy one—on the contrary; and I consider it an act of friendship to warn you of it; it brings nothing but trouble and vexation; for if an author acquires popularity, he has not a moment's tranquillity—all eyes are upon him—he is persecuted, criticised, plagiarised, cut up in reviews, and tormented to death." "But," said I, "can I not write anonymously?" "That would be ten times worse," said he; "the journalists would force you to acknowledge your name, or they would guess it, and be twice as severe upon you; and, besides, an honest man ought always to acknowledge his own work." I was certainly discouraged for the moment, but, for all that, I resolved that I would not renounce my literary projects, and my great intimacy with so celebrated a bookseller appeared to me to be a most favourable prognostic of my success. Frederic pressed us much to come and return his visit—my wife, our three elder children and myself. Augusta at first refused, for she dreaded the idea of meeting the romance writing mendicant, and that he would put us really into one of his books. She made the excuse that our children would be shy and awkward, and that their dress would not do for the city; but he combated all her arguments, saying it was high time they should gain a little courage, and that dress did not constitute character; and, he added also, that there would be no one but his own family, saying, I cannot ask the mendicant, because he is now travelling. My wife yielded, only requiring a little more time for some necessary preparations; and I was too delighted to cement a friendship so agreeable to me. The children were enchanted at the prospect of the excursion, never having left home before; they loaded him with caresses, and kissed their hands to him, with repeated good byes, as long as he remained in sight.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PREPARATIONS.

I could not understand what the preparations could be which my wife deemed necessary, for I knew that in our little village

no articles of fashionable dress could be procured; and besides, I thought my wife and children so charming, that no change could be required for them. But she told me that as they were going to the house of a rich man, and it was also a first visit, that they must be properly turned out, or the contrast between them and Uncle Frederic's nieces would be disagreeable. I agreed that no doubt there was a great difference between our children and my friend's; "but," I said "it will not signify, for ours are so young—why, Elizabeth is not more than sixteen." "But that," said my wife, "is the very age in which young girls are most particular; and besides, Elizabeth is quite as tall as I am, and Mina very nearly so, and they look quite grown up." I gave way, and begged her to do as she pleased, rather glad myself to think my children would be made more presentable. Accordingly, Augusta and the two elder girls set to work immediately. My toilette and my son's required but little alteration; but it was not so with the ladies. Every box and drawer in the house was ransacked. I was petrified, for I had always thought that none of them cared about dress, and especially Elizabeth; but she seemed quite as eager as her sisters. All the gowns were thrown over the backs of the chairs, the tables were covered with ribbons, and the muslin curtains of our company room were taken down to be cut up into something—goodness knew what—for this grand occasion. Even little Annette, though not to form one of the party, was as busy as possible, giving her advice, and trying the different ribbons by placing them in her hair or on her bosom, and all four chattering away at once in a manner I had never heard before; so that I could hardly hear a word that Charles, who was construing his Greek lesson, said. We happened to be in the chapter in which the dress of the Greeks was described. "What was the tunic, Louis?" said I. "It was without sleeves, and descended as far as the knees," said Louis. Mina, who only heard the latter part, and was busily engaged in arranging a dress, said, "No, no—it ought to come down to the heels." "Not one bit below the calf of the leg," said Louis. "For shame," said she, "it would be dreadful; no one wears short petticoats now." "She is only talking about her new gown that she is to wear on Tuesday," said Charles. "Oh, I know nothing about that," replied Louis. "Don't interrupt us, children," said I, and turning to Charles I asked him, "What was the robe?" "It was called the stole, and descended to the feet." "Yes, yes," said Mina, "it must come to the feet, and have a long train behind." "And what did they wear over it, Louis?" "A mantie." "What was the colour of that worn by the orators?" "Red." "Oh," exclaimed my wife, "red would look too countrified; it will be much better for the girls to wear white mantles." I looked up again quite puzzled. I thought my wife and daughters had lost their senses, and shouted out, "Red, Louis! Do let me beg

of you, my dears, to mind your haberdashery, and allow the boys to attend to their lessons." "So I am, my love," said my wife, "but you must permit us to choose our own colours, for men can understand nothing of ladies' dress. Only think how ridiculous a red mantle would look over violet." Saying which, she placed a bow of red ribbon upon a violet gown. "Dear wife," said I, "we were talking of the dress of the ancient Greeks, and I must beg of you to dress your girls as you please, but allow me to instruct the boys." At last they satisfied themselves as to their colours, and they then turned to me and did me the honour to ask me for some details as to the form and fashion of the dresses of my friend's nieces. I turned towards them, and found all eyes fixed upon me. "I confess," said I, "I did not pay any very great attention: the only thing that struck me much was, that one of them had a great pair of horns such as Moses is painted with. I will show you the print, and you will see exactly what it is." "Oh! mamma, mamma," said Mina, "there is Madame Skinck going bye, let me run after her, and I can bring back exactly the cut of her gown." "I will go, too," said Elizabeth, "two pair of eyes are better than one." "My heavens!" exclaimed I, "Elizabeth too! the wise, sensible Elizabeth!" "Stop, children," cried Augusta, "I will come with you; I shall never understand your description." I shook my head as I watched them all running together, and the next day I made Charles read Juvenal's Satire on the Frivolity of Women; but Augusta and the girls were so busy stitching, and cutting, and chattering together, that the very finest parts of the satire were completely unheeded, though I recited them after Charles, in my best voice and manner. Each day, as Madame Skinck passed by, one or other went out to look at her; the room was always full of litter, and I heard nothing talked of but waists, and flounces, and sleeves; my dictionaries were all taken up in pressing out gauzes and ribbons, and if I attempted to take one, all four jumped up at once, and entreated me not to disturb them. At length every thing was complete; the head dresses and gowns were to be tried on, and I was invited to come and see the effect. Elizabeth and Mina were full dressed, and blushing with pleasure and excitement; I examined them, shook my head with an uneasy look, and only said, "Well, dears! you are dressed exactly like Madame Skinck." "Yes, papa," said Minette, eagerly. But my wife was silent, and looked up at me inquisitively. I looked at them again from head to foot, and said, "Well, my dears, I can see nothing to find fault with; it is all very well done, but I don't know how it is, but Mina and you, Elizabeth, in your little straw hats, which perhaps are quite as heavy, seem to me as if you were much more free and at your ease, than with that bundle of gauze upon your heads, which perhaps does not weigh half an ounce, though it makes you look as if you had to support a hun-

dred weight." "Really, papa," said Charles, "Mina looks like Atlas supporting the world." "Exactly so, my son," replied I; "and it makes them look as anxious as if they really had that weight upon them." "Yes," said Louis, "and sisters look as if they were trying to balance themselves;" "just like the man who balanced the straw on his nose," said little Wilhelm. Tears came into the eyes of Mina. "Don't cry," said little Annette; "I could not help laughing though, for your cap is so very funny, especially this corner which comes over your ear," said she, at the same time holding up an ornament which hung down on one side. Minette tossed her head back, and pushed her sister away in a spiteful manner. My wife drew near, with a sad look. "I am sorry for it, dear Mina," said she, "for this point pleased you so much; but papa and sister are right; it is too ridiculous, and we will take it off." She tucked it underneath, and I heard her murmur, "Oh, this unlucky journey!" Elizabeth was a little way off; Louis whispered to me, "Eliza also is obliged to balance her head in that fine cap—but we won't tell her so." In fact, no one liked to say any thing to annoy this dear girl; all the remarks fell upon poor Mina; Elizabeth, however, felt them, and took off her cap. "I would willingly," said I, "give one of my old ducats—and that I think is all that those fine caps would have cost—if you would take them off and wear your every-day hats; for it will only just happen to you as it did to Annette the day she stood God-mother, and would insist on having her hair curled; you will look ridiculous; and Minette, you are the first to laugh at her about it." The two girls were still pouting at each other, but they advanced a few steps and embraced, without saying a word. "Come, my dear children," said my wife, "put on your common hats, they suit you much better; and as they will not quite accord with the rest of your finery, you shall wear your plain Sunday frocks. Besides, I was looking to-day at the agent's wife, and she had got a new sort of blue body over her other dress, of which we have no means of getting either the stuff or the pattern; and the want of it would spoil all." "You are quite right, Augusta," said I, "for, with all your trouble and pains, it was not successful, and you had not the least the look of the nieces of Uncle Frederic: very likely it was because you were not accustomed to wear such things. I know I should feel very much embarrassed if I were forced to put on armour, or even if I had to wear a sword." "Oh, this unlucky journey!" I heard resound from all sides. The mother and daughters seemed puzzled what to do; they were vexed at all their useless trouble, and mortified at their ill success. "Children," said I, pressing them in my arms, "your habits are still less suited for the city than your dress. Believe me, you will find even a greater difference between your ideas and those of the world than in your costume: and I thank my God that it is so; but as we are under an en-

gagement to pay this visit, why we must do it. Appear, then, just what you are—two good, simple, little country girls—two dear and much-loved daughters of an honest country pastor." Elizabeth ran into her chamber, and in less than five minutes appeared again in her usual dress, looking as beautiful as an angel, and with an air of satisfaction and content which rendered her fine features still more attractive. "Thus will I go, dearest papa," said she, "and if I am not thought fashionable, at least I shall not be considered ridiculous." "I will not quite answer for your not being ridiculed, dear Elizabeth," said I; "but at least you will not have the mortification of feeling you have made yourself so." Mina had remained in the room, in her fine attire; she now, in a manner between laughing and crying, tore off her beautiful cap, crushed it up in her hand, and quoting the last words of Socrates, said, "Crito, thou must sacrifice to *Æsculapius*;" the sacrifice is offered, and she threw the fine cap upon the table. Charles indignantly exclaimed, "Mina, do not turn into ridicule the most beautiful sentiments." "Ridicule," said Minette, "Heaven preserve me from it. The gods alone can know which sacrifice was the most difficult. But the destruction of my poor cap will never pass down to posterity." I pressed the dear girl to my bosom, and said, "The sacrifice of Crito is complete, for my Mina is cured!" My wife and Elizabeth returned to their spinning and knitting. Mina laughed and joked upon the useless labour of the preceding days, and their beautiful toilette. Elizabeth declared it was only to conceal her vexation. "Not at all," said Mina, looking archly at Charles; "the rubicon is passed, and I care not; I shall put on my straw hat, and if they laugh at me I will laugh again, and that so heartily that they shall be forced to stop." My little Minette was quite right; her gaiety was quite infectious; we all laughed and joked, and made game of the fine dresses. My wife restored the muslin curtains to the drawing room, trimmed the straw hats with pink ribbons, and they were all quite consoled, when one of the children overheard Madame Skinck say, as she passed by the window, that the colour of the dead gold was now quite out of fashion—for this was the very colour that Elizabeth's new jacket was made of.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CITY.

Uncle Frederic's carriage came to fetch us on the appointed day, and all but Mina felt rather low at quitting our home, even for so short a period as our visit was to take. My daughters were very nicely and simply dressed in white gowns with little

lows of ribbon; my wife was dressed in silk. They asked me a hundred questions about the style of the house, and what they would see; and every now and then looked down at their dress rather despondingly; but Minette laughed, and forced us all to do the same, even the grave Charles, who tried to prevent her joking upon his favourite philosophers; but even he could not help smiling at her parody of Diogenes. "I am poor," said she—"instead of puffs of gauze, I wear a hat of straw; instead of robes of silk, I have but a frock of cotton: but I oppose courage to misfortunes, and the manners of a simple country girl to the artificial refinements of the city, and reason to vanity." Her drollery kept up our spirits, and when we arrived, Uncle Frederic welcomed us with the most cordial friendship. After a few moments I took him aside, and confided to him all that had taken place relative to the dress of my daughters. "Oh," said he, joyfully, "it is just as it should be; I am rejoiced they have made no change; I should have been quite grieved had they done so; and you will see that they will themselves be much better satisfied." He then came up again to the children, spoke to them with the greatest kindness, set them at their ease—presented Charles with a valuable work on ancient history, with fine engravings—showed my wife and daughters some beautiful prints, which he explained to them—took them into the drawing room, the magnificence of which much surprised them—showed them the dining room, where the plate was already laid, and told them he had arranged their places close by him; he explained to them the different things which he thought they might be unaccustomed to, and we then came back into the reception room, where we found one of his nieces, exceedingly over-dressed. I thought Uncle Frederic cast a look of disapprobation at it, but he said nothing; and after some little time he proposed a game, in which he assisted my girls, and they soon became quite as skilful as any of the rest. Minette soon recovered her gaiety, and was quite at her ease. A third niece entered just as the game was most animated, and then the eldest and the others, which I thought was purposely arranged by Uncle Frederic to accustom his little village friends by degrees to so many strangers, and I felt greatly obliged to him for it. When his sister entered, my friend said, "you already know my friend Bemrode, and you will be much pleased with his wife and children." She was a large, stiff, grave-looking person, but she saluted us politely, though I perceived a sarcastic smile playing about her lips; and I also saw that whenever they thought their uncle was not observing them, his nieces looked at my children, and winked at each other; but Frederic kept a close eye upon them, was incessant in his attentions to my girls, and made them sit close by him. By degrees several men came in, whom our host introduced to us, but without quitting his post: the conversation became

general, and he by degrees made all the young people enter into it, without appearing to do so. His sister and my wife conversed together, and she introduced all the party to her. After some time a circle was formed, and different topics were discussed, which we knew nothing about, such as balls, operas, and the theatre. The literature of the day we were equally ignorant of; and it appeared to me that though Uncle Frederic might have changed the conversation, he, on the contrary, rather encouraged it, and said, laughing, to my girls, "Is it not very sad to understand nothing of all this?" The poor children looked quite disconcerted and uncomfortable. At length the conversation turned upon music, and I felt that my wife, my Elizabeth, and my Charles would again be at their ease. The four nieces played, talked, and criticized; and my wife made a little sign to her daughter to join in, which I also wished her to do, but soon perceived it was impossible, for every thing that was said was unintelligible to her. They were making comparisons between French and Italian music, spoke of manner, the music of the passions, picturesque music, sublime music, the buffo style, &c. &c., and commented on all the new composers, till the discussions became quite warm. Elizabeth, who knew none of these matters, had not a word to say; and at last every one began talking French, which I thought the more odd, as Uncle Frederic, though he paid them continued attention, seemed rather to enjoy their embarrassment, and from time to time asked them if it was not very disagreeable not to understand what the others were talking about. The poor children coloured up with confusion, and my wife with real vexation. I was much annoyed myself for my poor little ones; and I even felt vexed with myself that I had persuaded them to retain their simple costume. It was at that time the fashion to wear hoops, and Frederic's nieces had enormous ones, whilst my little girls had none at all; the simple drapery of their dresses fell in natural folds, and showed off their forms to great advantage in my eyes, as they reminded me of the Grecian statues; but still, by the side of the other ladies, their thin tall figures produced a strange effect, and attracted the observation of the fashionable people assembled. Ah, thought I, I would willingly give another of my ducats if the poor things had but got hoops, and I began to feel my poverty very trying. At last, after a most brilliant performance of one of the nieces, Uncle Frederic said to her, in German, "That is a splendid piece, my dear, but somehow I think the modern music has lost a good deal of the expression and tenderness it used to have; it does not speak to the heart and the feelings. What say you, Wahlen?" said he, addressing a very interesting looking young man, who stood near him. He smiled and replied, "Why you know my taste is extremely peculiar in that respect; but, however, here are some very celebrated composers who bear me out. Dif-

fault music astonishes me, and sometimes excites my admiration of its talent, but it never seems to move my heart." "I suppose your feelings resemble those of the Greeks," said Uncle Frederic. "Who was the celebrated poet that put a stop to a revolution amongst the Spartans, by the sweet tones of his lyre?" He turned round to Elizabeth, who modestly answered, "Terpander." "And the same thing is also related of Solon," said Charles, who, the moment the ancients were mentioned, felt himself in his element. Wahlen, looking first at Charles and then at Elizabeth, said, "I think they tell a story, to the same effect, of the ancient French music—of some knight who became quite mad from hearing some melody, but was restored to reason by hearing another." "And remember Olympus," said Elizabeth, "and Orpheus, and all the numberless wonderful effects of music related by Plutarch." "Or rather the pretended wonderful effects," said Minette; "for if those miracles were true, the ancient writers would not have said so much evil of music." "And what is it they do say, Miss Mina?" said Uncle Frederic. "They say it is a soft poison, which destroys the health of the soul, enervates the heart, and incites to all the vices." "What!" said Uncle Frederic, "do they say all these things? Do you hear, Wahlen, what the ancients say of music?" "O, do not believe her," said Elizabeth; "it is not of music in general that they speak thus; it is only of the Ionian music, which was a kind only just introduced at that time." "And it appears to me," said Frederic, "the same remark might apply to our modern style." "Modern!" said Elizabeth. "I do not quite understand the term." "Modern comes from the word mode, or fashion," said Frederic, "which you know nothing about, my dear child." Poor Elizabeth blushed, and the nieces smiled. We had often discussed this very point at home. Mina had always found a difficulty in learning music; and when once she discovered this passage in the ancients, she constantly brought it up. Frederic had been witness to one of these little quarrels, in which Charles had quoted all his favourite authors; he therefore brought on the conversation, to show off his young friends. The nieces had not one word to say during it. They tried at first to defend the modern music, but their uncle stopped them by saying to Mina, "So you will not allow of the wondrous effects of music!" "Oh, yes," said she, "you are mistaken there; but I never could learn music myself; or if I could, I should have liked to have gone all over the world, to make peace and charm away all evil. You should hear my brother Charles play; it is so majestic and serious—quite in the Doric style. I like nothing but merry tunes; but Elizabeth is quite for the Lydian strain." "And what is that?" said Frederic. "It is that which penetrates to the very bottom of the heart, and fills the eyes with tears: but I think it monstrously stupid to be shedding tears for that which ought only to give pleasure. There are plenty of occasions for

weeping, without making out more: for instance, Eliza," said she, bursting out laughing, "when we had to take the cup of hemlock, yesterday—" "My dear, dear Mina, do hold your tongue," said Elizabeth imploringly, under her breath. "What in the world do you mean by a cup of hemlock?" said Uncle Frederic. "Mina, Mina!" again reiterated Eliza. "Never fear," said Mina, "I am not going to betray your secret—or rather mine; for you had already returned to your straw hat, whilst I was still bobbing my head about like a pendulum." Uncle Frederic then recollected the account I had given him, and he entreated Mina to explain herself, till at last the whole story of the fashionable toilette, and the gauze caps, was fully detailed. "And so," said Uncle Frederic, "you had the courage to give up all?" "Yes," said she, "and I thank heaven we did so; especially since I have seen those young ladies who are so totally different. I am sure our fashionable attire would have half killed them with laughing." The air of drollery with which Mina detailed all the particulars, was most amusing, especially when she came to the part in which her little brother told them that they were like the man balancing the straw upon his nose, and her description was received with the greatest applause. "But it was only to me," said she, "that this was said; for though Eliza's cap was just like mine, no one could laugh at her; and though I was vexed enough at the game they made of me, it vexed me more to think she should look at all like me." Elizabeth, much moved, softly squeezed her hand; and the nieces, either to please their uncle, or because they were themselves won over by the good humour of my girls, put off their disdainful airs, and talked to them with the greatest freedom and kindness. Wahlen then begged Elizabeth to favour them with some music: she at first refused, saying she could not read music well, and knew nothing by heart. "Play out of your own head," said her mother. Wahlen led her to the instrument; she sat down and played a kind of prelude with a trembling uncertain touch. The gentlemen and the nieces were all standing round the piano. Frederic contrived some excuse for drawing them away. Wahlen alone remained, and turned over the leaves of a music book. She got through the little piece she had began, and he then sat down and played a beautiful air which he had found. They got into an animated conversation upon music; turning over the book together, Elizabeth struck some chords, insensibly the beauty of the instrument drew her on to compose; by degrees she heard the voices at the other end of the room becoming louder. Wahlen pretended for a moment to withdraw; she became immersed in her subject; and he listened in breathless agitation and ecstasy—she surpassed herself. I never heard any thing more harmonious or touching; her hand seemed to obey her heart, and admiration and emotion were visible on all features. The voices

got lower, lower, and at last a profound silence ensued, which seemed to awake Eliza from her trance and musical inspiration. She stopped short, and got up deeply blushing, and stammering out something about the beauty of the instrument. Every one overwhelmed her with applause, and she was led back to her mother, who enjoyed her triumph much more than she did, and I far more than either. Wahlen said nothing; he appeared absorbed in thought; and certainly looked as if he were a living example of the powers of music. At last he started from his reverie, and spoke to her in an under tone. My son then took her place, and gave a very fair specimen of the Doric style. "Behold," said Mina, "the March of the Spartans! These are the gods and heroes! Olympus and all!" "And now," said Charles, playing a lively, quick air, "what is this?" "It is Minette's March," said she. Dinner was now ready. Frederic placed my daughters by his side, and found out a hundred ways to show them off to advantage. He contrived to bring forward their acquaintance with the English language, and their knowledge on many subjects; till I began to think that his sister and her daughters were getting rather jealous and affronted; especially one of the young ladies who never took her eyes off Wahlen, who seemed neither to see nor hear any thing but Elizabeth. In the company was a gentleman of great learning, and Frederic had contrived that Charles should be seated by him; he spoke to the young man about his studies, especially the classics. My son took up the cudgels well when he disputed with him, and showed a degree of erudition which both pleased and surprised the gentleman. I never saw my boy so clear and animated. Mina, too, gained great credit. She replied with spirit and promptitude; her manner was easy and graceful; she held herself well, without stiffness; admired every thing, without vulgar astonishment; asked questions naturally about what was new to her; and gaily joked upon her ignorance: she was alike lively and modest, and any one would have thought she had lived in the world and received an accomplished education. Elizabeth was much more shy; she spoke in a low voice, and only to her nearest neighbours; blushed when she was addressed, and even committed some gaucheries she never would have been guilty of at home. Frederic, seeing the cloud on his nieces' countenances, adroitly brought back the conversation to the arts, and the pleasures of modern literature. Though my children had never once heard the names of the books they spoke of, Mina entered into the conversation, and asked many questions about the theatre, spectacles, and assemblies. "Why do you wish to know about these things?" said Uncle Frederic. "To talk about them to you, when you come to us," said she, "and to think of what you are amusing yourselves with when we do not see you." After dinner the nieces took her into their own chamber, and gave Mina a lesson in

fashion, which she quickly caught; and on returning to the drawing room I saw that her hair was differently dressed, and her bows differently arranged. The day appeared to last scarcely any time. My wife had been greatly admired, not only on her own account, but as the admirable mother of these interesting children. She had been asked by Frederic to play, and her style was greatly appreciated and applauded, especially by Wahlen, who openly said to her what he had not been able to express to Elizabeth; and he then ventured some complimentary remarks on the admirable education she had given to her children. At length the carriage came round to take us home; we were all enchanted with our day, and my wife and Elizabeth warmly praised Wahlen—Charles his learned friend—Minette every body, even the nieces—and all of us the kind Uncle Frederic; these praises were amply repeated by the three younger ones, for he had taken care to send them an immense packet of sugar plums,—thus all the family were equally delighted with the excursion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CONSEQUENCES.

The next day the first thing that Mina did was to take her fine cast-away cap. She twirled it round and round, singing and saying, "ha, ha, I know now how to arrange you." Her mother, having entered, went up to her, and the little one began in a lively tone to tell her what she meant to do. She pushed off her spinning wheel into the corner, threw her knitting into the drawer, and collected together all her haberdashery. Elizabeth just then came in. Mina began telling them how well she knew how to arrange the things, and all the three entered into the conversation. After a few moments I turned round, finding them silent, and saw Elizabeth with an apron over her shoulders, her hair all down, and her mother and sister putting it in papers. When it was arranged, according to Mina's taste, in imitation of the nieces, which took considerably more than an hour, without Eliza showing the least symptoms of fatigue. Mina placed the cap upon her head; though the youngest, she was the life and the head of the conference; they looked upon her as having experience, because she had been admitted into the dressing room of the young ladies, and had thoroughly investigated and examined everything regarding them. My wife, indeed, had taken the greatest pains to observe everything, but only with her eyes, and thus she quietly submitted to the decisions of Minette. As for Elizabeth, she acknowledged she had not looked much at the ladies' dresses; but she seemed quite *au fait* as to the appearance and attire of

the elegant Wahlen, and she undertook to reform the dress of her brothers. The following Sunday it was her turn to go to church, and at breakfast she appeared in grand costume; her hair bowed out behind, and falling in long ringlets; the bonnet, made by Minette, a very fair imitation of the nieces', though Charles tried to prove mathematically that it was nearly half an inch too high. Two very fair sized hoops stuck her gown out over her hips, and her dress was half opened in the front; Mina could not prevail upon her to have it entirely so. A large bouquet of narcissus was placed in front, and I saw her sister several times adjusting the different plaits, putting in pins, and pulling out the sleeves, which were immensely full at the ends. Elizabeth herself looked quite sheepish and ashamed, and blushed up to the ears when I regarded her. My wife looked at her with a mother's fondness; and I confess I, myself, was proud of her beauty, but I felt ill at ease, and said, with some disquietude, "how will all this look at church? you will attract attention; I had much rather you were dressed as usual." "Why," said Augusta and Mina both together, "she looks exceedingly nice." "Why," said I, "if I had known it I would have taken some other text; my subject to-day is the Rich Man and Lazarus. Every one knows my poverty, and it will strike them directly that Elizabeth is dressed out like the daughter of the rich man." "But, my dear," said my wife, "why should they think of Elizabeth in reference to Lazarus? Surely a pastor's daughter is quite equal to the nieces of a bookseller, and may be quite as well dressed." "No, my dear, not when the bookseller is rich and the minister poor. Now in my sermon I have actually a long passage upon dress, and every one would think I was preaching at Elizabeth." I thought this would at once have decided my wife, for I knew how deeply she felt about my sermons. But, alas, every one has some weak point, and that of Augusta was a vanity respecting her daughters; and she said, "my dear, I do wish you could take another sermon, for instance, that beautiful one, a false shame." "Even if I did," said I, "it would only make matters worse, for I there descant upon those who wish to pass for what they are not, and aim at what they have no right to be, and I am sure that would seem still more appropriate; besides, is it not more proper and easy for Elizabeth to change her dress than I my sermon? and if I even wished to do so there is not time, the last bell is ringing." "Well then," said my wife, "Elizabeth must go as she is, for I am sure she has no time to change." And I confess I was weak enough to cast a look of secret pleasure upon her, though I did whisper to my wife, "I do absolutely desire." I spoke low, but Elizabeth comprehended; she pinned her dress over her bosom, and walked in with Charles to church. Her mother did not that day accompany us, and Elizabeth, when she felt herself without her support, fainted and trembled, and became more and more embarrassed

by every person we met. When I saw all eyes fixed upon her as we sat in our pew, and beheld her extreme confusion, I felt half tempted to soften down some of the most severe strictures in my sermon; but the recollection of the first I had preached made me tremble from head to foot, and I bethought me, what! shall I dare to palliate that which I composed yesterday, with a strong feeling of its truth, because my own child is implicated? The sacred truth, of which I am the minister, shall never be garbled by me. Blush, blush, beloved child, since you have unhappily been exposed to this trial. Thank God, as yet, it is only weakness I have to reproach you with; but if your father dared to flatter this weakness he would indeed have to tremble at his vileness. No, no, my tender one, it is my painful duty to try and crush this seed of vanity in the bud; and if my own Augusta was present, I must with equal faithfulness do so, without changing a word. Could the reader but enter into one hundredth part of the extreme tenderness which I entertained for my Elizabeth, he would give me credit for the effort, and pity me for the strain it was upon my feelings. Brutus, I am sure, could hardly have felt more. I could not help looking at my poor child, who kept her head concealed as much as possible in her prayer book; the eyes of every one were upon her, my own were suffused with tears. But I never preached with more force and energy; and when, at the conclusion, I gave out the Psalm, which happened to be, "Like as a father pitieth his own children," I was altogether overpowered, and began to fancy I had really been too severe, so that on reaching home I was quite sad and downcast. I expected to have found my child quite depressed, but, on the contrary, was astonished to see her in excellent spirits, and neither she nor Charles said a word about my sermon. I discovered, too, that my wife having questioned Charles about it, he had told her he was so taken up with his sister's bonnet that he had not paid his usual attention to it. In the latter part it spoke of being just and true under all circumstances. "Could he have meant it against himself, mother? for he wept much, and every body seemed greatly moved." "I," said Elizabeth, "was also less able to hear than usual, for my hoop incommoded me; but I thought papa's sermon altogether very fine." I said to myself, when I heard these comments, "it was well for you young ones that your inattention saved you from the pain my severity would have caused you; but you will hear it soon enough, for I doubt not that even now the whole village is talking of it." But I was deceived; for they really were so taken up with the novel and extraordinary appearance of my daughter, that when I believed they were applying all my deprecatory remarks to her, they were rather thinking how well she looked; and though they wept when I did, they fancied that my sermon was upon death. My amour propre was rather nettled, I must confess. I thought

much upon the extreme pain I had unnecessarily given myself, and it brought back my thoughts to the time when Elizabeth had had the small pox. Oh, what agonizing and bitter tears did I shed; she was ignorant of them, she never saw them; but they did not the less scald my paternal heart. And, thought I, thus it is in everything, those sacrifices which are not remarked, which the world is ignorant of, which one offers in the earnest simplicity of the heart, these are the best sacrifices. Our Heavenly Father appreciates them, he counts our tears, and every thought is known unto him.

On the Monday my wife begged me to excuse the girls their lessons, as she had something very important for them to do. I discovered it was to tie up in drapery the curtains of the company room, in imitation of those they had seen in the city. One of the mattresses off my daughter's bed, and a handsome coverlet, were cut up to make cushions for the wicker chairs. The dresses of all the children were to be altered, the straw hats had to be taken less, the petticoats lengthened, and furbelows and frills added; puffs and trimmings put on to the sleeves; and, worse than all, an hour or two passed every day before the mirror. I used daily to remonstrate upon these follies, but my wife always said, "Oh, my dear, their ingenuity prevents its costing anything except their own trouble; if it was to put you to any expense I would stop it." "But, my dear wife," said I, sighing "it costs more, far more than that; the repose of heart of my children, their simplicity, the innocence of their minds, and perhaps the peace of their whole lives; and it must cost money, too, dear wife, for it certainly cannot be for ourselves alone that you are doing it. You will not be contented without showing off your fine furniture, your daughter's furbelows, and flounces, and hoops. Would to God we had never set eyes on Uncle Frederic." "But, my dear," said my wife, "we must some day or other have seen some one; you would not make nuns of your children! and it really is time they should know something of the world. When once they are married they will care for none of these things; but they must appear like other folks. Why, if Uncle Frederic had not so kindly watched over them at the party the other day, the whole company would have turned them into ridicule. Did I not see how his nieces and their friends stared at them? and even young Mr. Wahlen, why he never took his eyes off Eliza. I am sure it was only the fear of their uncle that kept the girls from laughing. No, no, my dear, my children are a part of myself, and I could not endure to see them ridiculed, even if I sit up all night to work for them; and as for the little changes in the furniture, why you know Madame Salteyburg is to come with her brother next time, and you would not like her to see furniture so totally different from what she is accustomed to." I was obliged to yield, and I soon found these changes were only

the commencement of the reformatations required. At last I said pettishly, one day, "here my dear, take all the old ducats, they were intended to furnish improvement to the minds of our children; but as Uncle Frederic has given them so many books, make use of them for ornamenting their persons if you will, but, my dear wife, in spite of all his generosity I cannot help fearing that Frederic's visit will prove a misfortune to us." "But," argued she, "if one of your books was to be published, surely that must equally bring us into communication with the world; for you must have known some booksellers, and our friend is, I am sure, a most kind and honest one, and will pay well for your works.." "My works!" Oh, how the words delighted me; I could reply nothing to such an argument, and I consented at once to all they wished. By degrees I became accustomed to all the changes. My daughters were such skilful workwomen that they did everything most beautifully, and such capital hair dressers, that their style was perfect; and what delighted me was, that every day one or other of them combed my wig for me, instead of being obliged once a month to pay a drunken hair-dresser, who had to do out all the wigs of the clergy of the district, and cost me both wine and money—their doing it covered the expense of the powder and pomatum, and also purchased some ribbons for the girls. At the end of the month Frederic, accompanied by his friend, the mendicant, arrived. I was alone in the house, my wife and children having gone to the village fair. Frederic had all his parcels taken out of the carriage, some books, a basket of wine, and a large box. The romance writer was all the while talking to me in the warmest and most affectionate manner, referring to the sentimental scene that had taken place between us: he asked a hundred questions about all the children, but most especially Elizabeth, whom he said he was dying to see, and whose kind manner towards him he particularly spoke of in terms of the greatest admiration and ecstasy. Ever since I had read romances, I had become mistrustful, and began to think that the other children had really shown quite as much feeling, and that it was my wife who had given him the money, and I could not see why he should only talk about Elizabeth. I accordingly told him all had an equal share in the transaction, and I was surprised he had not prevented it. "What!" said he, "really did they all show the same soft tenderness? I saw nothing but that angel, with her soft blue eyes filled with tears when she entreated me to take the money and not punish them by a refusal." My ill humour increased, but I tried to hide it for fear he should take notice of it, and put it in his romance. Frederic soon joined us, and warmly greeting me, said, "Well, dear pastor, I shall always think with gratitude of your visit, for it has caused a complete reform in my house." Alas! thought I, and in mine also. "My nieces," added he, "had a great ambition to be thought fashionable, and gave in t

all the excesses of the mode. My sister weakly indulged them in any fancy, and constantly told me it was absolutely necessary to do as others did; the most recent invention, however absurd, was always pronounced to be the most commodious; the newest book was always the best written; the newest music the only kind fit for playing. When I opposed the expences that this passion for novelty brought on, I was looked upon as stingy and odd, and was not attended to. When I saw your interesting family I thought I might, perhaps, convince my nieces that it was possible to succeed in society, and to give pleasure, without having the least idea of fashion, or having ever been out of the village. I invited you to come and spend the day with me, with your children. My nieces often asked me what there was in these young country girls that so attracted me. You shall judge for yourselves, said I, it is impossible to describe it. When you arrived, with your charming daughters, the elegant simplicity of their attire, the natural grace of their manner, their touching candour, their total ignorance of the customs of the city, and of all modern usages, joined to their deep knowledge of ancient literature, their modesty and real information, singularly struck my nieces and all the company. You know yourself how everything went, but you did not know my motives. I wished to make your daughters shine out; and, therefore, I first of all brought into the fore ground all the frivolity and little trifling talents of my nieces, that the more solid education of your daughters might prove of its real value; for the same reason I led them to converse on the more rare sciences, which, though perhaps in themselves useless to ladies, necessarily astonished and piqued my nieces, so much the more as they were profoundly ignorant of everything of the kind. I then left them to themselves, and the superior talents of Elizabeth for music, with the original sallies of Mina, and her amiable gaiety, surpassed my hopes. They won all hearts, and especially the admiration of young Wahlen, who is himself well informed, and a great enthusiast of everything refined and elegant; he was immensely struck with the deep knowledge, information, grace, and good taste of your daughters—he can talk of nothing else; and my nieces have an immense idea of his opinion. You perceive, young ladies, said I, that though my young friends neither know Wieland, Goëthe, or Rousseau, have not the least notion of the great world, the book of fashion, or the theatres, yet Elizabeth composes like an angel; she knows nothing of romances, and her dress is quite primitive and strange to your eyes. But Wahlen, the noble, refined, sensible Wahlen, whose taste is so elegant and correct, never ceases to speak of them with the greatest admiration. You see, then, that modesty, simplicity, purity of heart, and a cultivated understanding, are of more value than all the brilliant false glare and jargon of the world; just as the elegant forms of nature are superior to any thing that is invented by art.

I spoke with warmth and energy, and the impression made by your daughters, proved most salutary. My nieces have left off many of their airs and graces, and are become much more free from affectation. The men had all expressed themselves charmed with the costume of your daughters, and with their beautiful luxuriant hair, left to its native curl and colour, instead of being plastered and powdered like wigs, and with their sylph-like forms, with their plain white muslins. My nieces have now adopted their plan, leaving off their hoops, and the preposterous sleeves, which quite disfigured the shape of their arms. They look a hundred times handsomer than they did, and many of their young friends have followed their example; for what is really graceful is sure to gain admirers. They have also asked me for instructive books; they go out and gossip much less; occupy themselves much more, and have told me how much happier they feel; and it is to you, my dear friend, and to your charming daughters, that I am indebted for all this comfort." "Alas! alas!" said I, "you will also find a very great change in my house, from this unfortunate visit." Just as I was speaking my wife and daughters entered; they came in much more demurely than usual, for their troublesome hoops incommoded them. "I do perceive that there has been a reform," said Uncle Frederic, in a melancholy tone. He then turned to Mina and began to joke her about her dress, telling her it was already gone out of fashion. The romance writer had flown up to Elizabeth, and most tenderly addressed her. I looked at him with rather an uneasy eye, but Frederic assured me that though he was rather high flown in his expressions, he was nevertheless a most kind, amiable man; and that he thought of nothing but of describing a heroine of romance according to his imagination. "He has been long seeking one," said he, "and he thinks she is really a perfect specimen." Elizabeth at first did not seem even to recognize him; but when she knew it was Frederic's friend, the mendicant, she greeted him very cordially, and all the children seemed rejoiced to see him, offering him half their gingerbread, and the good things they had brought from the fair, till they made him as happy as possible. Frederic then ordered his large box to be brought in, and unpacked, saying, "this is to assist in the history of the reformation." It contained some lovely white straw hats, very pretty but very simple; some neat plain little caps, trimmed with lace; two lilac dresses, of very fine woollen texture, made in a most plain way, but very elegant, and especially without any hoops; and several pieces of very pretty ribbons. The opening of the box drew the young people away from the mendicant, and brought them round Uncle Frederic. "I wished, my dear children," said he, "to bring you something, a little more approaching to the fashion; but I see you have been before-hand with me, and gone far beyond me." They embraced him, laughing and crying, and then went off with their treasures. In about ha¹²

an hour they returned in high delight, having tried on all their things; and Mina sprang in jumping with joy, for they had thrown off their hoops, and all the children had received something, and were filled with gratitude, especially Charles with his parcel of books.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PLOT OF PEAS AND VARIOUS CONJECTURES.

"It is too dark for you to write now," said my wife, as I was taking up my pen to write this chapter. I was sitting at my desk, with my head leaning upon my hand, thinking deeply upon the trials to which we are all of us exposed, as I constantly do when I have any sad recollections, or any thing to write which is of a mournful character. My wife repeated her observation, as I did not appear to notice her. I then said, "What I am writing is itself of a dark hue." "What is it?" said she. "It is the day on which Frederic presented our daughters with their lilac dresses." "Ah," said she, with a deep sigh, "that was the commencement of all our troubles." "Not the gift of the gowns, dear wife, but our griefs arise, I think, as they always must do, from our own folly"—"or rather our sinfulness," said she. "No, dear, for our conscience punishes us for that; but our weakness and our folly are sure to produce misfortunes; and I am sure ours brought forth plenty of fruit, and no doubt it was all for our good; for if we had not had this pain and sorrow, neither should we have known the sympathy and comfort we have experienced. If all were uninterruptedly fortunate, there would be no calling forth of affection and tenderness." Saying this, I sat down again to my writing, and took up the theme. When Elizabeth and Mina had dressed themselves in their new gowns and the other things brought to them by Frederic, and the style being exactly the happy medium between their own extravagant copies and their former simple attire, really suited them exceedingly well. Our old servant Mary was lost in astonishment at all the different changes which had taken place, both in their wardrobes and also in the furniture of our house. A thousand conjectures had also been formed in the village, and Mary had been asked all sorts of questions, which she was unable to answer; but now she combined the presents brought by Frederic, and the visit of his friend the mendicant, and conceived that there must be some lover in the case; she was sure it must be for Elizabeth; but still she thought both these gentlemen were too old, and supposed that the true Lothario had not yet made his appearance. After breakfast the romance writer had requested Elizabeth to play, which

she did most divinely. He was in a state of perfect ecstacy, and exclaimed, "Oh, may this celestial and perfect harmony ever reign in your own bosom, charming Elizabeth! and may the Graces ever be your companions. Look at this ring," said he, taking from his finger a superbly engraved cornelian, representing the three Graces entwined together. "Elizabeth! in begging you to accept it, I dedicate you to the Graces!" He stripped it from his own little finger, and placed it on her second one. This present annoyed me, as I feared it really meant something; and even Elizabeth suspected it, and wished to decline accepting it. Frederic, seeing her design, cried out, "Take it, my dear child; I assure you you have nothing more to dread than some sentimental rhapsody in one of his novels." She blushed, and kept it; but her colour was even more brilliant when Frederic told her that young Wahlen was coming on horseback. "He would have come yesterday, with us," said he, "but my friend, the Author, was afraid he might spoil the effect of his first reception, and I wished my dear friends to be a little more dressed." Pleasure sparkled in Elizabeth's eyes, and she turned to look for Mina, not seeing her, she went out of the room to seek her, and I heard her say, "Mina, Mina, he is coming here on horseback." I concluded that they must have already been speaking of him, for Mina understood at once who it was she meant, and old Mary, who happened to be by, asked, who was coming on horseback; as they did not answer her, she resolved to watch for herself, and I doubt if even Elizabeth was more anxious for his approach than the good old woman. The moment she heard the sound of the horse's feet, off she was to the yard to open the gate, and get the horse put into the stable. Her delight was great in seeing an elegantly dressed young man leap from his horse; and when she took the bridle from him, he gave her a very handsome gratuity; this at once confirmed her suspicions, and she was quite certain that the handsome and generous young gentleman must be the lover of her dear young lady. Elizabeth had also been on the watch, and appearing at the door, was most politely saluted by Wahlen, who most respectfully kissed her hand, which covered her with blushes, as it was a compliment she had never received before. She introduced him into the room where we were assembled; and poor old Mary said, as they passed her, he kissed her hand, and she coloured, it is sure to be a wedding. Every one was glad to see Wahlen again, especially my wife. She recollected that she had heard him express his fondness for chants, and rummaged over her old hoards of music, to find some of her father's, which he used to play in the church. She sat down to the piano, Elizabeth and Wahlen standing behind her, and singing together the Latin words. She played them two or three tunes, and at last we all joined in chorus with so much energy, that it ended in a burst of laughter, at which Augusta

was not at all pleased. Wahlen became every moment more marked in his attentions, and more tender, and respectful in his manner. He reminded Elizabeth of the beautiful walks she had described near the parsonage, and asked her if she would show him some of them; she called for Mina, but she was assisting her mother in her preparations for dinner. Annette was gathering strawberries, Charles and his brothers were looking over their Latin lesson, and my friends were discussing books, and so she was compelled to go by herself; but she would not take him beyond the garden, for her natural good feeling and tact told her it would attract observation from the villagers. The two young people were so similar in disposition, that they seemed at once to understand each other, and from the very first their sympathies had drawn them together. They began with speaking of the lovely view, the fine situation of the house, the splendid weather, the beauties of nature, and then of sensibility, virtue, the misfortunes of life, of death, separation, eternity, and the blessed hopes of everlasting felicity; till the more their ideas were exalted the more their hearts were drawn together. Wahlen, with all the warmth and enthusiasm of a young and ardent mind, was charmed and enchanted with the unsophisticated innocence and purity of Elizabeth. He felt at once that everything she said came from her heart, and his feelings became so moved that he could not avoid showing it; and old Mary, who happened to be gathering peas for dinner, and was watching them, though herself concealed by the height of the pea-stalks, formed her own conclusions, especially when she heard him, in the excitement of his conversation, address her by her name, and enforce what he was saying by a warm pressure of the hand. Oh, yes, dearest Elizabeth, said she, we shall soon see what this is coming to, and oh, how happy you will be with such a fine gentleman for a husband. Now, says she, I know all about it, your journey to town, all the grand changes in the house, the new fashions of my young ladies, and the fine galloping horse. Elizabeth, who had been quite overcome by his energetic address, had made a pretence to go and help Mary, whom she had just caught a glimpse of amongst the peas, and who thus addressed her; "well, Miss, here I am, crying my eyes out." "Good heavens!" said Elizabeth, "what is the matter, my dear Mary?" "Oh, it is only about you and that beautiful young gentleman. Well, Miss, I hope God will bless you, and give you many years together, you will make a beautiful couple, I am sure." "A beautiful couple! what do you mean—are you foolish, Mary?" "No, no, Miss, I am not foolish. I know very well how it all is; but no one shall hear anything from me." "Really, Mary, you are very nonsensical," said the poor girl, turning scarlet. "Why, Miss, do you think I have no eyes? I saw everything quite plain, whilst I was gathering the peas, and you need not be angry and say pshaw; for remember.

dear, how many years I have known you, how I carried you in my arms, and dandled you on my knees. Oh, yes, indeed, I cannot help crying with joy when I think about it. You will tell me, now, won't you? and on your wedding day I will come back here, and offer up my prayers for you." Elizabeth was unable to answer her, but she shook her head and burst into tears, put her hand up to brush them off, and, in doing this, Mary caught sight of the ring, which the romance writer had put upon her finger; and, holding it up, she said, "Oh, you naughty girl, don't I see the proof? do you think I forget the proverb about the wedding ring?" Elizabeth, more and more confused, continued her denial; but she said, "Ah, you may say no as long as you like, but old Mary will know it time enough to prepare the wedding breakfast at any rate." This was too much for Elizabeth, she rushed out of the garden, carrying with her the vision of that happiness which she did not think could be in store for her—she could not define her feelings; but she knew her tranquillity was gone. Seeing Wahlen walking with us at some little distance, she coloured, she knew not why, and tried to avoid him; but she could not fly from his image, it was constantly before her, and filled all her thoughts. Ah, said she to herself, if it had been he that gave me this ring! She called to mind how he had interested her from the very first day she had seen him, and she felt shocked with herself at the hasty progress of her feelings towards him. She was full of apprehension that others, as well as old Mary, might have come to the knowledge of her secret. At last I saw her, and called her to join us, and return to the house. Her serenity was completely destroyed; she was absent, thoughtful, uneasy, and sat down in a corner, rolling between her fingers a small pea blossom, which she had picked whilst Mary was speaking to her. Wahlen did not long leave her in her reverie, he approached her, and spoke to her with that ease and self-possession which men almost always know how to retain, however touched their hearts may be, and which, consequently, gives them such an advantage over the softer sex. Mina soon joined them, and began to joke Wahlen on his taste for singing the parts, and declared he had made a convert of Elizabeth; and she then began to imitate Latin chanting, with such comic gravity, and was so very droll, that she made them laugh; and thus, by degrees, took off the awkwardness, and before dinner Elizabeth was again herself. Mary, as she assisted her to lay the cloth, would have recommenced her teasing, but she seriously scolded her, and desired her to leave off her folly, without, however, being able to convince her she was wrong.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DECLARATION.

Mary, seeing she could get nothing out of Elizabeth, turned towards little Annette, who was a child of singular observation, and had immense tact in finding out everything that was going on, without appearing to put herself the least in the way; whenever anything was to be settled she always knew all about it before her elder sisters, but this time she was quite in the dark, and did not comprehend any of old Mary's questions; but she directly put others to her, learnt at once on what her conjectures were grounded, and confirmed both herself and Mary in their ideas; but Annette was rather piqued that she had not herself made the discovery, and that nothing should have been confided to her, so she resolved to be upon the watch, and put on her little wise and prudent air with a determination to let nothing escape her. Wahlen was seated at table between my wife and Elizabeth, who was the only one of the children who had a wine glass placed by her, because she was the eldest, and our stock was but small. Wahlen two or three times touched her glass with some amiable pleasantry, and he kept his eyes constantly fixed on her with an air of tenderness and gallantry, which did not escape the vigilant eyes of the little spy. She also took care to follow the two supposed lovers, when after dinner they again adjourned to the garden. Augusta and Mina had remained behind to help Mary put away the things, and the young couple having taken the path to a shrubbery of hazel, which was a favourite resort of Elizabeth's, the little monkey left them and run round to the other end, that she might watch them, and hear what they were saying. A short time afterwards she met them, holding in her hand a nosegay of wild flowers, which she had gathered. "Will you not give me that, lovely bouquet?" said Wahlen. "No," said the little one. "And why not?" said Elizabeth, attempting to take it. Annette put her hand behind her back and said—"this nosegay is for Uncle Frederic; but I will give Mr. Wahlen a much more beautiful one on his wedding-day." Poor Elizabeth felt the thunder-bolt burst upon her, and she was crushed by it; she blushed, she trembled, she dared not lift up her eyes, or look at Wahlen, who caught hold of her hand and retained it with a gentle pressure, which she was quite unable to resist. No, poor innocent Elizabeth! you had never learnt to disguise your sentiments! to conceal them under a feigned gaiety! and the veil of a child's silly joke! With less of frankness, and also with less of real emotion, another in a like case might have turned off her embarrassment, run after her little sister, snatched away her nosegay, and giving it Wahlen, commenced some other subject directly, but Elizabeth could only weep, blush, and tremble; and thus suffer her whole heart to be read without reserve. Wahlen himself tried to relieve her distress

by laughing at the little Annette, and was beginning to speak, when perceiving her deadly paleness, and that she looked ready to faint away, he held out his arms to support her in an agitation almost equal to her own; and whilst with one hand she covered her face and tried to conceal her burning tears, he held the other, and when she attempted to withdraw it raised it to his lips and covered it with kisses. She implored him to leave her, and tried in vain to assume a firmness of voice. "Never, never!" cried he; "never will I withdraw this hand till you promise to be mine. Oh, adorable girl," said he, "give me only a sign, press but my hand, and bless me with the hope that you return my love, and that your heart beats in unison with mine!" In vain! Elizabeth was perfectly motionless; her eyes were fixed upon the ground, and hot burning drops fell from them, unperceived by him; her breathing was oppressed, the trembling of her hands proved that she was alive, or otherwise her silence, her rigidity, and the whiteness of her lips would have led him to think she was dead. Dreadfully alarmed, he placed her under a tree, and kneeling beside her, tried to restore animation. "Elizabeth, dearest Elizabeth!" said he, "recover yourself; what can cause this fearful condition? Speak, oh speak! I adore you, I honour and admire you as much as I love you! Oh, give me but a glimpse of hope, in the name of heaven! I entreat you show me some token to relieve my anxiety." She made an effort, raised her languid hand, and gently endeavoured to put him away from her. "Ah," said he despondingly, "do I comprehend you! will you reject me?" He then threw himself down on a turf bank a few steps from her, and hid his head in the grass. "Wahlen," said she, in a trembling voice, "Oh, Wahlen, do not be unhappy." "Unhappy! I should be the most wretched of men if you refuse me, if you will not accept my ardent vows, and bind yourself to me. Oh, Elizabeth, I feel I shall die." "No, no," said the innocent girl in agony, and moving towards him; "no, no, I would rather die myself; but what can I say?" "Tell me you love me," said he. "I do, I do," said she hesitating, and in a voice of great tremor; "I love, I love." "Oh say that it is me, that it is me, my Elizabeth; restore me to life!" She drooped her head, which fell on Wahlen's shoulder, and her tears flowed abundantly. At this moment Mina, who had been looking in the garden for them, was moving towards them, when she suddenly beheld the state of her sister. "Good heavens," said she, "what is the matter? Oh, sir, what can it be? Has any accident happened—any misfortune? and you also, you look quite agast! Oh, Eliza, Eliza, what is the cause of these tears? tell me I entreat you." She seated herself by her sister, and tenderly pressed her in her arms. Elizabeth raised her head, gave a look of great tenderness towards Wahlen, and said "Oh dear Mina, dear Mina, implore him not to die; my heart is so full I cannot speak. If

you did but know all, Mina. Annette! Wahlen! Oh, Mina, tell him, tell him to be happy." Mina looked at her with an air of terror and amazement, and said "who? what?—Annette! Wahlen!" "I cannot understand you." "I cannot tell you just now," said Elizabeth, still clinging convulsively to her sister. "Well, well, Mr. Wahlen, will not you explain? I have just met Annette, she is perfectly well; is it you who are ill? Why is it she wants me to tell you not to die?" Wahlen, who had risen from the ground at the approach of Mina, was at first rather embarrassed, but soon recovered himself, and said, standing between the two sisters, "Elizabeth, I once again in the presence of your sister, implore you to be my wife. I love you, I loved you from the moment I first saw you. If you refuse me you make me the most miserable of men." Elizabeth hid her face on her sister's shoulder, and was still silent. "Tell him, tell him," said Mina: "you know, Elizabeth, it is a totally different feeling from that which you and I have for one another, that is not the kind of affection which Wahlen means; tell him the truth. You know how pleased you were with him when we came back from Uncle Frederic's, and you remember what you said to me this morning, when you came in from gathering the peas for dinner." Elizabeth tried to prevent any further words by kissing her. Mina, however, still kept on, "speak, sister, speak! I can feel how your heart is beating; I know well you do love him. Oh, Wahlen," said she, turning round to him, "you ought not to stand like a stork, but fall on your knees before her, that is the way." But Wahlen did not fall on his knees, he uttered no fine speeches. he thought Mina's discourse much too trifling, he even imagined she was trying to make game of him. Elizabeth, however, was rather relieved by her presence, and her looks said, yes, Wahlen. I do love you; but she blushed as her eyes met his, and was still unable to speak. Mina had really been in earnest in what she said. for on the day she had been at Uncle Frederic's, when she had gone with his nieces into their own apartment, they had not only shown her all their dresses and trinkets, but they had lent her some romances, which, notwithstanding my prohibition when I returned those which I had at first brought from the librarian. she had taken from them, and her girlish curiosity had induced her to read them. She had also shown them to her sister, and proposed enjoying them together; but this good girl, the moment she perceived what they were, had steadily refused to look into them. although she promised her sister not to betray her disobedience. upon the condition that Mina would lay down the books the moment she should find anything wrong in them. The silly child had read on and on, and became more and more enchanted; she found herself transported into a new world, of which she had hitherto had no idea, and could not tear herself from the dangerous and infatuating study, constantly saying, "oh, Eliza, you

know not how entrancing it is, the lines of Plutarch are nothing to be compared with it; it is just such things as might happen to us—what then can be the harm of reading about them? It will just teach us how we ought to act. I am sure these cannot be like those my father looked into, or he never would have forbidden them.” As she got on, she was so completely carried away with the excitement, that she sat up half the night, and even sometimes awoke Elizabeth, and persecuted her to read with her, but Elizabeth always stoutly refused, and used to say, “how can you pretend to tell whether it is a true description of the affairs of the heart, when you can know nothing about it?” “All very well,” said Minette, “but it seems to me that I do know all about it, and that it is quite what I myself should feel, though I might not be able to express it in words. Listen, Eliza, I will tell you the story; at any rate, papa does not forbid that.” The scrupulous Eliza said it was all the same thing, embraced her sister with a sigh, and fell asleep again, whilst Mina still continued her story. It is not to be wondered at, then, that she instantly guessed the state of things between the lovers, when she came upon them; but she was surprised to find Wahlen so quiet, and unlike her heroes of romance in not kneeling down and addressing fine speeches to her sister. She, therefore, half doubted the ardour of his attachment, though her sister appeared to be quite in the right vein; but when she found that neither of them made any reply, she got vexed, and said, “speak, then, can you not? you know, Elizabeth, that you do love him. Ah, I have often told you how it would be, and I shall have my turn too some day or other; I have read all about it—I know it all by heart—and I can tell you exactly all you have felt ever since you first met him at Uncle Frederic’s; you have thought of nothing else, he has always made a part in everything you have done; your heart is oppressed, you suffer, and yet this very suffering is delightful to you. This morning, when you heard he was coming, how your heart beat! when you saw him approach, what happiness you felt! when he took your hand and kissed it, and told you of his love, you felt almost as if you could die, and yet, really, it was to you a new and delightful existence! Am I not telling you right?” Poor Elizabeth, utterly overcome, still kept silent, but permitted Wahlen to retain her hand, whilst he said, “you do then return my ardent affection, you do love me; and no power on earth shall ever separate us.” “Ah, that is right,” said Mina, “that is something like.” She tenderly embraced her sister, and said, laughing, “how surprised papa will be, though he has forbidden all romances; he will find that one of his girls has read them, and the other is acting one; but he will be very happy when he sees how deeply beloved his dear Elizabeth is, and how happy she is.” “Yes, I am happy,” said she, “perfectly happy,” laying her hand on her heart, and fixing her beautiful eyes upon Wahlen. “And

you will be so always," said Mina, "for Wahlen will never deceive you." "Oh, Elizabeth," said Wahlen, with deep solemnity, "if I could ever deceive you, if I could ever cease to love you as I do at this moment, if I could afflict for one instant your pure and innocent heart, if I could betray your confidence, I should be a monster. No, Elizabeth, no; you must be mine, though every power should oppose." "But Mina, Mina," said Elizabeth, "what if my father should object?" "Oh, dear child," said Mina, "fathers always do, you must be prepared for that, there must be a something. But at any rate, Wahlen, you are not, I trust, some great prince, or baron in disguise, for then"—— Wahlen started, and Mina looked rather frightened also, and said, "Why, your countenance forebodes evil, and the great misfortune in all love matters is that they come on so rapidly that no one has ever time to say who and what are you." Elizabeth interrupted Wahlen with sudden firmness, "I am yours, and yours eternally." "Nothing shall ever separate us. Let us go this moment and speak to your parents, I will confide everything to your father." Elizabeth looked at him tenderly, and then at her sister, and said, "come Mina, come with us to my father." But Mina hung her head with an uneasy air, and said, "oh, dear Eliza, some how I do not feel satisfied about this; do not go to my father, you know how he loves you, he could not bear to see you unhappy; if he even feared anything for you, he would be wretched. If it was I, it would be quite another thing; we should only laugh at it; but you, oh, it would kill him if anything goes wrong. Oh think no more of it, look upon it as a joke, and do not pursue it, for I see it will not do." Elizabeth, looking at Wahlen, said, "no, Mina, it is no joke, my heart is his for ever; come, come to my father." Mina still appealed to Wahlen, and with clasped hands, said, "Tell us at least if there is any obstacle." "I am forced," said he, with a sad and melancholy accent, "I am compelled, my Elizabeth, to acknowledge that I am not entirely my own master. I have not any fortune of my own, I depend upon an uncle; but I am sure that when he has once seen you, he cannot withhold his consent; my life, my happiness, my everything depends upon it." Mina grew still paler; in the very last romance she had read there was a cruel and inflexible uncle. "Ah," said she, "all uncles are alike, he will never consent. What sort of a man is he?" "He is an old gentleman, living on his property, in fact, he is the Baron de Wahlen." "Oh, merciful heavens! a baron! that is the worst that could happen; I will have nothing to do with it. A baron! why you will kill my poor papa on the spot. Oh, Elizabeth, I implore you to give it up." Elizabeth, terrified, agreed that it was better to say nothing, and Mina promised eternal fidelity and friendship to them, "and as soon as the obstacles are removed, we will then tell my father," said she; "but oh, Elizabeth, an uncle! and a baron, too! it will never, never

do." Just at this moment our voices were heard in the garden. Wahlen had only time to reiterate his vows of constancy and eternal truth. Mina, putting her arm within his, they advanced to meet us, whilst Elizabeth, who could not conceal her emotion, turned into another walk, and did not appear again, till she had succeeded in becoming a little more calm. Soon after our guests left us, and the two girls retired early to their chamber, without any conversation having taken place with regard to our guests. The fears of Mina, respecting the baron, were only natural; yet why should I not acknowledge it? I had brought them up with the most profound respect for all rank and superior station. The only nobleman we knew anything of was Count Rangard, our lord of the village; and we judged of others by him. Every year, when he came to visit his estate, the greatest preparations were made for his reception, as if for a magnificent prince; and his arrival was a great event to us all. It always was to me a fine opportunity for speaking of my knowledge of human nature to my wife and children. I made the finest discourses to them to prove that nothing was so easy as to present oneself with courage and self-respect before a great Lord; and that we ought to have a feeling of dignity, and remember he was just like any other man; that we ought not to be imposed upon by vain titles; that the real way to obtain the respect due to one was to pretend to no more than we could claim. I worked myself up with these conversations till I presented myself before the great man with the finest ideas of my own consequence, and a philosophic contempt of the difference of ranks; but no sooner did I stand before him and beheld the beautiful cross of the Teutonic order upon his breast, his fine gold laced coat, his commanding attitude, and air of complete nonchalance, than I became altogether confounded and petrified. I stood behind the agent; I could not find a word to say; and if attempted it, I was sure to bungle; and though the count was very polite towards me, I did not recover my timidity; but the very moment I left the room my courage returned, and, in my own mind, I began to compose the finest discourses between us, and pleased myself in imagining him (what he certainly was not) a railer against the clergy and every thing good, in order that I might gratify myself with the idea of reproving and repulsing his attacks, with the dignity which became my office, and thereby reducing him to silence. Ah, thought I, if I only now was standing before him, how I would astonish him. When I reached home I pretended to assume an air of great disdain, and said, I would not give one leaf of my journal, for any communication or connection with the count, though he was very polite, and a good sort of fellow. And I would then tell my wife how he patted me on the shoulder and took my hand when he spoke to me, and called me dear pastor. My children had a most exalted idea of all the nobility, and I am convinced that if Elizabeth had been

aware that Wahlen belonged to that order, it would alone have prevented her from forming any attachment to him; but at Uncle Frederic's there appeared to be no feeling of the sort; the great wealth of the librarian, the consideration in which he was held for his talents, the style of his house, furniture, and mode of living, put him, as it were, upon a level with the very first society. Wahlen was most intimate there; he was always addressed simply by his name, and so none of us were in the least aware of his rank and title; so that when Minette heard his uncle was a baron she lost all hope and wished also to take it from her sister; but Elizabeth, who was under the dominion of that passion which equalizes all ranks, cared not now whether he was a tradesman or a lord. She loved him, she was beloved by him, that was all she cared for. She had some fears of the uncle, but none of Wahlen. Whilst Mina felt afraid that his attachment could never stand out against opposition, and that it was impossible that her sister, the daughter of a humble parson, could ever become a baroness; she therefore tried every means in her power to cure her sister's passion; and when she so strongly insisted upon my not being made acquainted with the engagement, it was because she hoped they would both see the hopelessness of it, and how useless it was to cause me so much pain; but the bitter tears her sister shed, whenever she talked to her of giving it up, at last touched her so much that she ceased to press it. She wept with her, permitted her to indulge a faint ray of hope, and trusted to time to effect a cure. They did not say anything to either myself or my wife, who would never have endured a word upon what she would consider so precocious an attachment. I soon perceived a change in Elizabeth's manner, but was far from attributing it to the right cause. Love, if I may so speak, had elevated her above her station, and above herself; she seemed quite of a different order from the rest of us; I wondered, when I beheld her melancholy look, and the sighs with which she so often relieved her oppressed spirits, what it was that rendered her unhappy; I imagined her thoughts were all fixed upon a future and better world, and that she only looked upon the present as a passing illusion. From her infancy her tender and affectionate nature had always peculiarly attached her to us all; her brothers, her sisters, and all around her; even the animals that she took pleasure in attending; but now that the whole sensibility of her nature was drawn out, she seemed to have a feeling of kindness and sympathy towards every one, the poor, the unfortunate, the suffering. She always spoke with the most touching eloquence, and her mother and I often used to say she is too good and perfect for this world, but we little knew that it was an earthly love which was the real cause of what we observed.

CHAPTER XXI.

DELUSIVE EXPECTATIONS.

Alas! alas! the attachment of Elizabeth; the tears of Mina; all the anxious cares which came upon us, beginning with the attempts at fashion of my poor little girls; all these troubles and many, many more were to be traced entirely to our unfortunate visit to the kind and amiable librarian. When he originally introduced us into a circle so much above our means, he did everything in his power to prevent our feeling any inconvenience as regarded expense; he made many handsome presents to my son, and to my two eldest daughters, and in the most delicate manner in the world he had forced many things, which he thought useful, both on my wife and on me, pretending sometimes to lay a wager with us, sometimes to take advantage of a fete day or birth day, and was always heaping gifts on the little ones, either in the shape of things useful to them or provisions for the house; but, on the other hand, the luxuries thus acquired rendered necessary many accompaniments, which we had formerly never thought about; and though the harmony, peace, and love, which had always reigned amongst us, continued undisturbed, I could not at times help feeling uneasy at the thoughts of our increased expenditure. I looked to the future with anxiety; and, for the first time in my life, began to indulge a wish for better preferment. The thoughts of quitting my parishioners, whom I really regarded as my own children, was no doubt very painful to me; but I was not so vain as to suppose my place could not easily be filled up, and I hoped also I might be succeeded by some one with greater means, as my large family necessarily rendered my powers of usefulness exceedingly limited. When I thought of my want of patronage, Frederic told me he would look to it for me, and three days after I spoke to him he wrote to me, and told me that the dean of Schwartzhague, who was eighty-three years old, was very infirm, and not likely to live a year, that he had canvassed for me as his successor, and that it was worth at least four times my present benefice; he sent his own carriage to fetch me, in order that I might transact some necessary business, and I set out accompanied by the ardent wishes of my family. On reaching my good friend's house he went with me to the president and principal voters, who seemed quite prepared to receive me, and gave me the kind promises of support; so that I was quite astonished at the influence my good Frederic must possess with them. I mentioned my surprise to him, and he replied "ah, my dear friend, money will do anything. The nephew of the president is indebted to me for a loan at a time when he was in much need of it; another of the voters borrowed from me at a time he wished to make a favourable investment; and to a third, who was anxious to add to a valuable library, I sold some books with long credit;

in short, I considered everything going on capitally, and that I shall have to congratulate you as a dean without fail." I did not feel quite easy in my conscience at this mode of obtaining preferment. "Can you point out a better?" said Uncle Frederic; "if any one deserves church patronage you are the man, and I have no scruple whatever." Though still unconvinced in my own mind, I let the matter rest. And the next day my friend gave a grand dinner to all the members of the consistory, from whom I received the most positive promises of support, and, after dinner, they actually drank my health as their future dean, and I returned home better satisfied with my success than I was with the manner of obtaining it; and, yet, such is the weakness and inconsistency of our nature, quietly agreeing to what I could not approve. When I related to my family all that had occurred, Charles was the only one who could enter into my scruples, and he openly expressed his disapproval, and declared he should never like to have an appointment thus obtained. Mina told him he was a goose. I was delighted to observe the firmness of his principles, and said, what at the time I really felt, that I should not at all regret the failure of my hopes. Mina asked a hundred questions as to the rank of a dean, and seemed to think much more of the rank than of the money, and when her mother, whose grandfather had held the office, explained the dignity to her, she exchanged looks with Elizabeth, and smiled, thinking no doubt that it brought her more on a par with the Baron de Wahlen. Our new prospects filled us all with plenty of occupation; we calculated the revenues of the deanery; and though they amounted to four times as much as my present cure, the young people found various ways of disposing of it. "We may have a larger income, and greater luxuries," said I; "but we cannot have happier days than we have passed together here, my dear wife; our furniture may be finer, but our hearts cannot be more contented; we may have fewer difficulties, but our cares will increase in proportion; and though on St. Sylvester's day we have seldom had any overplus, at least we had no debts, and, such being the case, my dear children, what shall we be the better after all?" They all looked very serious except Mina, who commenced with her usual vivacity to prove to me that it was a much better thing to be a dean than a vicar; that one had much more weight, and could do much more good with twelve hundred crowns than with two hundred, and that we should all be much happier, with which conclusion she threw her arms round her sister's neck and embraced her. Less than a month afterwards the old dean died; the president sent to me and desired me, as a mere matter of form, to draw up a petition to the consistory. Every body knew my expectations, and no one doubted of my success. We had employed our little board in purchasing a carriage, as Frederic had told me it was indispensable thing for a dean to have one. I had been for-

fortunate enough to procure an excellent second-hand one from a neighbouring farmer. When it arrived we all went out into the yard to look at it. Mina jumped into it and saluted us with an amusing air of dignity, which caused us all to laugh, and, yet, when I got into it, to examine the inside, I could not help thinking how dignified I should feel when I should make my pastoral and official visits. But the carriage unfortunately entailed other expenses, and we sold all we could in order to get things to make a proper appearance, and, in fact, we got into the foolish habit of living upon expectation.

CHAPTER XXII.

SORROW, DISAPPOINTMENT, AND REGRET.

We were one day as usual conversing upon my prospects, and looking forward to a visit from uncle Frederic, whom we were expecting. Mina had had the carriage drawn out in full view that he might see it as he drew up, when a letter was brought to me from his sister, to announce the sad intelligence of his sudden death from a fit of apoplexy. Her letter was filled with trite and cold observations, which plainly showed me all friendly intercourse would cease between us. Our affliction, upon the loss of our kind friend, was deep, sincere, and genuine, for though our intimacy had been only recently established, it had ripened into the warmest friendship. He was also our only friend, and I often thought when he was with us, and I saw his kind affection to my children, that if it pleased God to remove me from them he would be to them in the place of a father. The little ones shed torrents of tears for their kind uncle Frederic, and our anguish was mingled with sad and serious reflections on the uncertainty of life, and the instability of human affairs. At the moment we little knew how completely all our hopes and all our friend's kind designs for us were frustrated by his death. I said, how completely is all the pleasure gone of my expected preferment; it seems as if I hardly could enter it, now that I shall never hear his kind and cordial voice congratulating me, and addressing me as Mr. Dean! "And," said Mina, "I would just as soon go on foot now, the carriage will no longer afford me any pleasure." I looked out and saw the carriage where it had been placed for him to see it, and bid the children take it away: they did so, and pushed it into the barn. We passed the rest of the evening in sad recollections of our past happy intercourse with our kind friend, and grateful recollections of all his exertions in my behalf. The following day we were still continuing the same sad subject, when I was interrupted by a messenger from the members of the consistory, with a letter of condolence in my loss, and at the same time informing me that their

plans were now changed, and they could no longer hold out to me any hopes of being elected as Dean. I had the presence of mind to put the letter in my pocket without showing my disappointment, and after a few moments I retired into my chamber, and it really seemed to me as if I were doomed to disappointment. Just at the moment I heard a beggar under the window, and I was struck with the conviction that there were still others more unhappy than myself, who had no other resources than the compassion of their fellow creatures: but then again I thought they had come step by step to this melancholy condition—they have long given up all hope of any happier fate; but I am cast down at once into despondency. Had my dear friend died a week before I should no doubt have been equally thrown over by the consistory; but then I should not have gone into so much useless expense. I should have had my little treasure; I should not have parted with my silver candlesticks and plate to procure a carriage; and I should have been able to say to my children—Our hopes of preferment are gone bye like a dream; but we are as well off as we were before; but now, alas, our friend is gone; we have parted with all our resources for the future, and we have been living beyond our means. O, my poor children, how shall I tell them. I shrank from the sad duty. It was autumn—the weather was dark and stormy. I went to my window, and gazed out on the village. At least it was some consolation to me that I should not have to leave my dear parishioners and those kind people by whom I was so beloved. I saw the lights starting up from the different cottages one after another, and my thoughts went back to the first day I came into the parish, when I had to preach my probation sermon, and how happy I esteemed myself when I found I had got my appointment, which I had so recently looked down upon with disdain. Ungrateful man, said I to myself, how many, many hours of happiness have I passed here. How many times, in this my window, have I from the bottom of my heart thanked my Heavenly Father for the happy lot he awarded me, and at this moment in what way is it changed. What have I lost after all but a few old coins? Why I have only to imagine myself still possessed of them. I could surely enjoy quite as much the soup and vegetables prepared by my wife and daughters, even if I did eat them with an iron spoon, and I could sell my useless carriage for pretty nearly what it had cost me; and thus I happily quieted my mind, and in a much more amiable disposition I returned to the family sitting room, and tried to impart to them the consolation I had myself attained. By the light of a lamp my six children were seated round their mother, in the same room as that in which the widow of the late vicar had watched over her five darlings, when they were dying of the small pox. Mina, as I entered, was still talking of uncle Frederic, and I paced up and down some moments listening to what she said, till a break in the conversation should

enable me to make my communication. My son spoke of the way in which the stoic philosophers conducted themselves when they lost their friends. Elizabeth said "even if it were possible to feel as they did, she could not endure to do so." "No doubt," said she, "it is deeply painful to separate from those we love, but however deep the grief may be, and I, no doubt, should tremble to go through the ordeal, I would not be deprived of the comfort of one last adieu; in fact, whatever trials we may be subjected to, I would like to be able to endure them with those we love, which would help me to submit with resignation and patience." "And I," said Mina, "do not believe what those pretended sages are pleased to say; for either they did not really suffer, or else they were as silly as they were proud, and only hid their sighs and grief; but it is an easy matter to laugh at those sorrows which do not affect us. Real sorrows cannot thus be put aside." "I quite agree with you, Mina," said I; "real sorrow cannot thus be put aside, and if a person pretends to be above weeping for them he shows a despicable disposition. There are, indeed, some sorrows which wound and pain the heart. May God in his mercy keep such from us. But what are commonly called sorrows, such as poverty, want, disappointment, they are hardly to be called miseries." Mina looked at me with an inquisitive, incredulous look, and I went on, "what is the true basis of happiness? love, confidence, family union, and a clear conscience. Why if we were even much poorer than we are now there would still be nothing really to fret about. In that case we might well emulate the stoics. In that case poverty ought only to unite us in still stronger bonds; and natural cares, confidence, and friendship should still more draw out our sympathies for each other. The daughter, who in prison nourished her father from her own bosom, had more real happiness and true tenderness than any one brought up in the lap of luxury could form any idea of; and when I reflect on what life is, so fugitive and so transient, and that we hardly pass out of it before we are altogether forgotten; when I think that this very chamber, where we are now all assembled and conversing together with so much happiness and so many blessings, was, scarcely more than thirty years ago, the scene where five beloved children, in the very flower of their age, were cut off in the presence of an adoring mother; no one but myself having had any idea of their existence; yes, dearest wife, on this very spot, where you are now standing, and where your loving heart is throbbing with tender affection for your sweet children, a tender mother put forth her trembling hand to close the eyes of one after another of hers; and now the dying agonies of those children, and the sighs of their mother, are all forgotten; and all that interests us, and occupies our minds, will, in like manner, be forgotten. I am almost tempted, whilst I clasp you in my arms, to say to you, oh, let us love one another; give your hearts to m-

dear ones; this life is not worth forming plans for. Let us be content with what we have and look only to a better world." My emotion and earnestness communicated itself to all; we wept and embraced one another, with a soft and sad tenderness, and I continued, "if you are still to remain here, where you were all born, dear children, shall you be unhappy? We are poor, certainly, but what if we were rich? If I were dean to-morrow, we should be forced to live amongst those richer than ourselves, who would make a greater show than we could do, who could surpass us in expense. If we really do desire it, we may still ride in our carriage, our neighbours will lend us horses, as they have already promised; but surely we can still be happy." "What do you mean, dear papa?" said Mina. "I mean, dearest child," said I, "that I am not to be the dean, but to remain the simple pastor of Eizebach, but still the happiest of parents." The dumb stupor of the whole party gave me time to pull out my letter. "No doubt after all our expectations," said I, "it is hard to give it up, but I am sure we shall do so with a good grace; I expect it of you, my children." "But, dear papa," said the little ones, "you will let us have one ride in the carriage." "You shall, my children," said I. Elizabeth and my wife embraced each other weeping, and Augusta said, in a low voice, "the shock is severe, dear, and we shall feel it for some time." Elizabeth, who perhaps felt it more than any one, did not speak, but she took up her work with a cheerful and resigned countenance. Charles said, with rather an affected air, "I cannot make up my mind as to whether it is a misfortune or not, and therefore I will not think about it." "You are quite a simpleton, with your cold-blooded nonsense," said Mina, warmly. "I feel it is a very great affliction, notwithstanding all you say to console us, dear papa, we all feel it is so; and you, my poor dear Elizabeth, though you do not say a word, what do you think about it?" Elizabeth threw herself sobbing into her arms; and I, who knew well her gentle and kind disposition, felt at once that there must be some mystery, and was very unhappy about it. "Why," said I to Mina, "should Elizabeth be more afflicted than any of the rest?" "Because—because," said Mina, stammering, "she has the most feeling." And she immediately began to ask questions to turn off my attention. "Draw round me in a circle," said I, "for we ought not to lose this opportunity of making some useful resolutions." I then told them that I had not the slightest hope of ever obtaining better preferment, that the very injustice the consistory had shown me would prevent them from ever doing any thing for me. This rather astonished the children, for they could not understand that those wrongs which we are least inclined to pardon another for, are those which they have now the means of making us commit against them. "As for me," said I, "I have made up my mind never again to solicit any favour, to end my days here, and to begin again to live as we did before we knew Uncle Fred-

eric. We are poorer now than we were then; we must go back to our former simplicity, and by care, economy, and assiduous labour try to repair our improvidence." Mina burst into tears. "Remember," said I, "dear Mina, the courage with which you sacrificed a cock to Jupiter. Let this lesson be made useful to us by showing us that upright hearts and simple manners are of more real value to us than any thing else. Chance threw in our way a friend, such as we never could have expected, and such a one as is seldom met with in the great world. His sister and her four daughters despised us; the consistory abandoned me, without any regard to their promises, when I was no longer supported by a great man; dear as that friend was to us, we bought him at too high a price. We have hands, we can work, and love one another, and be happy." I stopped, but my heart was heavy. Charles, with a serious air, said, "let those who agree with my father hold up their hands." He made the proposal with so grave a tone that Elizabeth and Mina at once held up their hands, and the three little ones, thinking it was a game, did the same, holding them as high as they could, with a merry laugh; I had mechanically done the same, and Mina laughed at the strange appearance we made with all our hands in the air. "We have gained the victory," said she, and ran to fetch out her spinning wheel; she showed more courage than any of us. "Good bye all mantua making," said she; "I will not again set you aside, but I will keep my pretty hat and blue gown because they were the first presents of dear Uncle Frederic."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DISCOVERY.

In our immediate neighbourhood there resided a young man of easy circumstances, who rented a nice little place which he farmed himself. He was a sober-minded, quiet youth, and very well spoken of. Some parts of his farm bordered on the vicarage lands, and he often used to come to speak to me on matters of business. On some of these occasions he had seen Elizabeth, and had been struck equally with her beauty, modesty, and industry. Being completely his own master, with sufficient means to be able to please himself, he had tried to find out from me whether his attentions to my daughter would be favourably received. At the time he spoke to me I was indulging the expectations of being elevated to the Deanery; and though I could have nothing to object to in the young man, I was rather annoyed at his pretensions, as I thought my daughter would have a right to look higher; and I therefore said, that I considered Elizabeth full young to think of marriage, and thus, as I considered, the

matter dropped. But the young farmer did not look upon my answer as a refusal. He visited me even more frequently than before, and testified great friendship towards me; and without actually naming the subject, contrived to let me know the exact state of his affairs and fortune, in a very delicate and open manner, which pleased me extremely. I began to think better of his proposal, thinking that if he could wait for two years it would be a very nice thing for her younger brothers and sisters to have so good a friend in the neighbourhood. My wife fully entered into the plan, though she considered her too young as yet to name the subject to her, and two years full too short for her to enter in the marriage state. "But," said I, "we must give some hope to Mr. Jalymann, or he will form some other attachment; but how can we, without Elizabeth's consent? for though you consider her but a child, she is seventeen, and has a right to be consulted." Accordingly, after supper, when the younger children had retired, and we were seated at our usual occupations, and Charles was studying Seneca on Consolation, and preparing for a dispute with Mina, I addressed them, and said, "My dear children, it is high time I should speak to you on certain feelings of the human heart, which as yet you are totally unacquainted with." Charles looked up, placing his finger on the passage he was reading, and listened attentively. "You know what it is," said I, "to love us, as your parents, and you can fully comprehend the tenderness and affection we entertain towards you; but these are the mere ties of blood. There are others which are altogether of a different nature, and I wish you all, but especially Elizabeth, to listen attentively while I describe them." My wife smiled at this exordium, and I did so myself, but I felt puzzled how to introduce my subject. Our smile communicated itself to the children, and Mina burst out laughing. "I can well understand, my dear," said I, turning towards her, "that what I am about to say may appear singular and ridiculous to you, but nevertheless"—"Oh, no, not at all ridiculous," said she; "I quite understand how you can love ten different people in ten different ways—your father different from your mother, your brother from your sister, and every one totally different from your lover." "How, Mina," said I, rather surprised at her quickness, "How in the world do you pretend to know any thing about it?" "Oh! I know it," said she, rather confused, "I know it from some of those books that Uncle Frederick's niece lent me, and which I suppose we must return now. I thought, dear papa, you would not mind, as we live so retired, my reading them!" I hardly knew how to answer her. I looked across at her mother, and shook my head, and ordered her to bring the books to me. Charles gazed at them in a manner which at once convinced me that he at least had never read them. "So young ladies," said I, "you have been reading romances—then I may spare myself the trouble of speak-

ing to you"—"Oh, papa," said Mina, "Elizabeth has never read a line of them, though I often pressed her to do so." "But I suppose, miss, you have taken care to instruct her in the ten different kinds of love?" "Ten different kinds!" said Charles, "I should be curious to hear them all described." Mina said, "Oh, dear papa, I have read all about it, but Elizabeth, I assure you, has never read one single line on the subject." My wife began turning over the leaves in a very agitated manner. I was still more vexed and displeased with myself than I was with my child. I grieved that I had not kept a closer watch over her. I trembled when I heard her detail all she had gathered from these pernicious books, and I hardly knew what to say to her, or how to combat the opinions she laid down, lest by making too much of them I should only increase the evil. I observed also, that Charles listened with extreme curiosity whilst she was holding forth; I accordingly stopped the conversation, saying, "Elizabeth, I wished to tell you that Mr. Jalymann loves you, and has made proposals of marriage for you." The two sisters turned deadly pale, and looked at each other. I added, "You are very young, dear child." "Yes," said my wife, "much, much too young to think of marriage." "Oh, much too young, much too young," said Mina, "Are you not, Elizabeth?" Elizabeth became more and more agitated; she trembled like an aspen leaf, and then, throwing herself into her mother's arms, said, "Oh! mama, mama, I am wretched! Pardon, pardon your unhappy daughter." "All is lost now," said Mina, with a gesture of despair. It is utterly impossible to describe the scene, or to depict the emotion which Elizabeth's conduct produced in us. Terror, surprise, and amazement prevented us all from uttering a word. We looked at the fixed but weeping eyes and colourless lips of our child, and trembled with agitation, till at last my wife uttered, in a tone of anguish, "Elizabeth, what have I to forgive?" The poor girl drew back a few steps, her head bent down on her bosom, her two hands clasped convulsively together, and seemed as if more imploring our compassion than trusting in our affection. "My dearest child," said I, drawing her gently towards me, but without moving. She gasped for utterance, and said, "I love—I love—devotedly, earnestly; my heart—my heart—is—belongs to—the Baron de Wahlen." These few words showed the whole extent of our misfortune. The attentions of the young man, on the day he passed with us, had not escaped me. I had questioned Uncle Frederic about him, and he had told me that he was a baron of a very ancient family, and the nephew of a man exceedingly haughty and proud of his ancestry, and from that moment I thought no more of it, but my daughter's confession quite overwhelmed me. My wife, on the contrary, seemed to recover her presence of mind, and said, "The Baron de Wahlen—is this pride, Elizabeth?" "No, no!" said Mina, "we did not even know

he was a baron till they were already in love with one another, and engaged." "Well, then," said my wife, "you know it now, and there is an end of it; you are two silly children, you can know nothing about love at seventeen." "Mother," said Elizabeth, "I do love him—and I shall love him for ever." "Child!" said her mother, "what silly nonsense you are talking! Speak to her, my husband; you are her father, and it is your duty to check such folly." I was absolutely upset; my heart was divided between pity, grief, and vexation. "Alas! my wife, what can I say? We who were so happy! too, too happy! Now I can look forward to nothing but tears, disappointments, complaints, and sorrows! Oh! my children, my children! sit down here, and think of my poor friend, the widow; think how she resigned her five lovely children—her daughter just married. Oh! merciful Father," said I, looking up to heaven, "make us resigned to thy will; give us patience and courage, and let us be willing to submit to Thee in all things!" "My dearest husband," said Augusta, "why are you so agitated? Surely Elizabeth will be reasonable." "You yourself are reasonable," said I, "but you have forgotten the feelings of your youth." "Ah! mother, dear mother," said Elizabeth, holding out her arms towards her, "I cannot renounce him; it would cost me my life to give him up." My wife, whose notions with regard to love, before the mature age of twenty, I have already made known, was now quite enraged. At first she had been inclined to look upon the matter as mere childish folly, now she regarded it as obstinacy, or something worse; she refused the tender embrace of the poor child; and seeing the romances still on the table, she took them up, and saying, those odious and detestable books, she threw them to the other end of the room. I never before had seen her in a rage, or so totally different from her usual calm and gentle manner: the humble attitude of Elizabeth, the cries of Mina, who protested to her mother that her sister had never looked into the books, gave me altogether the most poignant anguish I had ever felt. It was the first disturbance I had ever had in my family. Elizabeth made another effort to approach her mother, but she forbade her to do so, until she would promise to give up her attachment. Mina, who was always impetuous, caught her sister in her arms, calling her her poor innocent sister, and assuring her that she would give up her life for her. Her words were accompanied by looks that still further irritated her mother; and poor Elizabeth, overcome by the sad and painful emotions she endured, completely lost all consciousness: her head fell back, her arms dropped down by her side, and she sank down motionless and colourless. The children called out that she was dead; and my wife, hardly able to support herself, threw herself down by her side, calling to her in a voice of anguish, and covering her lips with kisses. Elizabeth at last came to herself, on the bosom of her mother, and

altogether we raised our trembling hands to heaven, and prayed the Almighty to bless and strengthen us. The mother and daughter seemed more fully to hang upon one another; they seemed fonder than ever of each other; they retired together for some time, and after they returned; and we sat down together mutually seeking to show one another every mark of affection. My wife at last said to me, "Dear husband, you are often obliged to say, 'children, it is time to go to bed,' but to night we seem too unhappy, or too happy, to be able to separate." I interrupted her, and said, "My beloved, it is thus we must ever feel, when we have something to forgive, or for which we desire to be forgiven; let us come to an understanding. Elizabeth can never be better disposed, or be more willing than at this moment, to make a sacrifice; and we can never be more anxious or desirous to console her, to calm her, and to soften the pain and distress of her heart by the sympathy and the tender affection of ours towards her." We then drew out from the two sisters all the circumstances of Wahlen's proposal, and the discovery of his rank. My wife said nothing with regard to Elizabeth's seventeen years, which she evidently would have done but for what had just occurred; but she could not help animadverting on Wahlen's conduct in thus taking advantage of the feelings of one so young and so innocent. Mina could not let this pass without a vehement defence of Wahlen, whose ardent affection she described in a manner to astonish her mother and deeply interest Charles. I gently represented to Elizabeth how utterly hopeless her case was. She only answered me with a deep sigh. I told her I was certain if she would encourage the attentions of Jalymann she would soon cease to remember Wahlen. "Never! never!" said she, holding out her hand; "I neither can nor will forget him! But, dear father, if you order it, and if my mother desires it, I will try to obey you in all things." "Elizabeth, my child," said I, "you know how miserably poor we are; Jalymann is rich; he is your equal, and you his; he is open, upright, simple-minded, devoted to you, and his humble sphere is more suited to you than the false and fashionable glare of the world. In the family of Wahlen you would be looked down on and despised; in that of Jalymann, honoured as you ought to be. You could be the protectress of your brothers and sisters; and you would be much more gratified than with what you imagine to be the happiness of love." "Ah, my father," said she, weeping, "even if it were so—but—it is your will, and I will try to obey you." I was, I must own it, proud of what I considered my daughter's self-control and obedience, and I at once resolved to avail myself of it. Besides, she was so young, and had seen so very little of Wahlen, that I really thought she deceived herself in thinking her love invincible. In six months after she is engaged to Jalymann, thought I, Wahlen will be completely forgotten. Her new duties

as a wife will thoroughly engage her affectionate heart, and overcome her youthful fancy; she will delight in being mistress of a fine farm and nice house, close to us all, and surrounded by her brothers and sisters. I embraced her with deep affection; she trembled and staggered; and I found she was about to faint again, but she supported herself in my arms as if determined to strengthen herself and her own will by resting on my paternal bosom. "Dearest child," said I, "receive my blessing: I accept your devotion of yourself to my wishes, and I feel sure that the best of daughters cannot fail of being both blessed and happy in every state and condition of life." She shook her head almost imperceptibly, and I added, "if, my precious child, I thought for one moment that your present sacrifice would be painful to you, or that even long before the end of the year your tears would not all be forgotten in your joy and happiness, far from exacting this sacrifice, I would be the first to try and promote your present wishes." "Speak no more of that, my father," said she, in a tone of bitterness and anguish, "Speak no more of that, I have given you my word, and I will pray for strength to keep it in its utmost extent. Happiness I do not look for; at least," said she, with a celestial smile, "not former happiness;" and her look of intense devotion plainly showed in what kind of happiness her hopes were fixed; "but I am and I shall be a happy daughter." The tone in which she uttered these words tore my heart; but I still thought that I was acting for her good, that it was better to strike whilst the iron was hot, and not leave her time to dwell upon her feelings. I therefore said, "may I then tell Mr. Jalyman that you consent to receive him?" She bowed her head in token of her acquiescence. "To-morrow, then, dear Elizabeth—for so excellent a daughter is fully fit to undertake the duties of a wife—to-morrow I will speak to him; and your mother's birth-day shall be the day of the wedding." "Oh, papa," said she, trembling, "whatever you will; but not to-morrow, grant me only one day to think, then—but, no, I have taken the resolution, and to-morrow I will be a happy daughter." I embraced her again; but my wife, opening her eyes with astonishment, said, "this cannot be, my dear; is she to-morrow to give her promise to become the wife of a man she does not love? No, no, it is not right, we must not deceive this good man; we ought to tell him that she at present loves another." I smiled, and said, "no doubt, dear wife, we ought if the heart of Elizabeth was not so thoroughly known to us, but we know well what a treasure we are giving to Jalyman, and our silence on the subject is perfectly justified by prudence." "God preserve us from it," said she, rising hastily: "such prudence would be the greatest deceit; I should tremble. I should not dare to stand at the altar to see my Elizabeth present herself with a lie in her mouth and infidelity in her heart. No, no, let any troubles or misfortunes come upon us rather than that."

father than expose our sweet girl to become the most odious of beings, an unfaithful wife." I said all I could to calm my wife and make her listen to my arguments; she was perfectly intractable, and Elizabeth's countenance betrayed the secret satisfaction she felt. Mina seconded her mother with undisguised warmth; Charles with serious firmness; and all I could say was, "well, my dears, it is late, we had better go to bed." Mina thought the victory gained; she seized her sister's arm, and pressed it, without saying a word; but I saw her lips move, and could distinguish, "Wahlen," though she did not dare to speak. When alone with Augusta I tried to infuse into her my notions with regard to love, but in vain. "No," said she, "no, I now see plainly that Elizabeth's heart is truly touched. I know it by myself, she feels for him just as I do for you; a love that can never change; and we will never give up our excellent child to that which is opposed to all her own right feelings, and which would destroy her happiness not only in this world, but very probably in the next." "But what is to become of her love for Wahlen?" said I, "It will pass away if not opposed, perhaps; at least I hope so." "It will if she marries Jalymann." We argued the point long, and always came back to the same conclusion; till at last, sleep, nature's best restorer and soother of the troubled mind, came to our relief.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DISCORD.

"Ah that unlucky visit to the city," said I in the morning, when I awoke. "Ah that unfortunate journey," said my wife as she was preparing the breakfast. "I wish I had never left home," said Elizabeth, with a deep sigh. "Believe me," said Mina, "all that has happened depends neither on town nor country, it is only our own hearts that are the cause of it." Whether Mina was right or wrong, it was nevertheless true, that all our former happiness had vanished, for from that day a spirit of discord rose up in my family, so that almost continually a petty warfare was established amongst us; sometimes open, sometimes covert, and the worst of it was, it was not confined to two contending parties, but there was always a third, a sort of umpire, who invariably sided with one side or the other. Elizabeth, even the very next morning, seemed to have quite changed her purpose. When I put her in mind of her promise she entrenched herself at once behind her mother's opinions, and talked of the duplicity of marrying a man whilst another possessed her heart, and Mina warmly backed her up. If my wife even hinted at the impropriety of forming an attachment at seventeen, especially to a baron, the girls would then turn

round and quote what I had said about the weakness of the human heart, and they actually forced me to repeat my words, notwithstanding my attempt to qualify what I said by animadversions and advice. If my wife and I expressed an opinion at all different, Mina would always put in her word, in the hope that our disagreement on the subject would be a bar to her sister's engagement being pressed upon her; if I attempted any pathetic appeal to their feelings, and my wife and Eliza began to show symptoms of yielding, she would at once talk about Wahlen's dying of grief, or the atrocity of deceiving Jalymann, when the three would weep, and embrace one another. If I was quite alone with Elizabeth I could lead her as I liked, but when ever she saw Mina again it was all over. I actually at last compromised my paternal dignity, and tried to persuade the child to assist me in gaining over her sister, telling her that if she would only forget Wahlen she would very soon be rejoiced to find herself the wife of so worthy a man; but, somehow, I always felt myself degraded and unable to press my arguments, and the little wretch always smiled over her easy victory. Having one day been more than usually eloquent on the subject, and described the happiness it would be to us all to have her sister settled so near us; she became quite serious, her eyes filled with tears, and I really thought her almost handsome. "Dear father," said she, "no doubt you know the human heart in general much better than we do, but you do not understand that of Elizabeth's; if you think for one moment that the promptitude with which she consented to this wretched sacrifice of herself proceeded from any diminution of affection towards Wahlen, I know her better than you, and I know she would die in obeying you rather than marry Wahlen against your wishes, for to displease you would be worse to her than death. There are hearts, dearest father, with whom the one drop too much in the cup of bitterness quite crushes and overwhelms them, and Elizabeth's is one of that sort. If it were myself that was called upon to take this terrible step, no doubt it would be very dreadful to me; but when once I had made up my mind I would forget, at least I think I should; but Elizabeth! oh, tell me, father, did you ever see her forget anything that she had ever loved? Her love for every one of us has always gone on increasing. She never, never, can cease to love; no, no, I am thoroughly convinced she never could be happy or live if she is compelled to give up Wahlen." "But, my child," said I, "the thing is an utter impossibility." "Dearest father, Elizabeth more than hopes for it, she has the very fullest confidence in the fidelity and resolution of Wahlen; indeed, she trusts in him with a resolution so firm that all doubts vanish into air like shadows. Again I repeat you do not know her heart; she feels that she would sacrifice to you not an impossibility but an absolute certainty; and if you could but hear her speak of the happiness she

looks forward to, you would at once see that the only alternative between that happiness she dreams of, but is willing to sacrifice for you, is a certain and speedy death." Mina's voice was choked with her sobs, and added, "I am so thoroughly convinced of what I say that I feel that whoever presses her to renounce Wahlen wishes her death, and I will use every effort to prevent her doing so, for I know too well how utterly wretched she is." "She looked happy and serene this morning," said I. "Yes," said she, "and so she would if her heart was broken. Do not deceive yourself, you will but render yourself and all of us miserable. Elizabeth is like the sensitive plant, whose leaves wither when they are touched." "Well Mina so they do, but they expand again afterwards." "But what if they never should do so, my father?" This conversation filled me with anguish, but I could not persuade myself I was wrong, and I exacted a promise from Elizabeth that she would never see Wahlen without my consent, nor write to him any more, which she at once agreed to without the slightest demur, although she gave a deep sigh which went to my very heart: however I thought I could at any time release her from her promise, and that satisfied me. For several days nothing more was said; and I avoided Mina, whose piercing eyes seemed to watch me on all occasions. I resolved to leave matters to take their own course, for it was one of my favourite theories, in all cases of anxiety, to trust in providence, and wait the result. Charles argued with me that in certain cases this might be quite right, but that men ought not to act upon this rule in general, or leave to fate (as it were) their conduct and their plans; for though all events, no doubt, are directed by a higher power, yet we are bound to act as if it depended upon ourselves. "A good pilot," said he, "will never let go of the helm, though he may hear of a hundred vessels being safely brought into port by chance." "Chance, my son, say providence, who must know best what is for our good." "Well, father, providence sends tempests or calms, according to his will, but he permits the pilot still to guide the vessel through the rocks, to manage it in the storm, and to bring it into the harbour." "What you say is true, with certain modifications." "And what would not be true with modifications?" said he; "but I would rather perish with my eyes open than be dragged along blindfold." Charles was young, and rather inclined to stoicism; but I resolved I would not leave things completely to chance, and I therefore took an opportunity of letting Jalymann know that I should be very happy to see him, for I thought if he was in the constant habit of coming to us Elizabeth might insensibly be brought round; and that if I could only succeed in getting her to be favourable to my wishes, her mother and sister must give way.

The first time Jalymann appeared she seemed intuitively to have guessed my design; she looked at me, and then exchanged with

her sister a glance, and left the room. When they returned I put on a very composed and quiet manner, and seeing that Mina very narrowly watched me, I gave Elizabeth an opportunity of withdrawing, and even arranged some commission for her, which kept her absent for some time. I then engaged my wife and Jalymann in conversation; being fully convinced that it would produce the effect of her cordially inviting him to come and see us again. When he took his leave I said nothing, and, as I expected, Augusta pressed him much to renew his visit. I said to her, "perhaps, my dear, in the present state of affairs it would have been better not to have asked him." She immediately took up the ground of common politeness and hospitality, &c., &c.; but Mina was not off her guard, and looked up earnestly at me; her whole conduct in the affair had piqued me, and set me on the qui vive to baffle her in her avowed intention of protecting her sister's engagement. Every one expressed themselves pleased with Jalymann, excepting Elizabeth, who never once looked at him. His appearance, at first, had nothing striking in it, but when he spoke the expression of his countenance was exceedingly interesting, and his smile betokened great kindness and cordiality. If he had not the cultivation of mind and manners of a man of fashion, he had that natural politeness which proceeds from goodness of heart, good sense, intelligence, and uprightness; all he said showed good sound sense, accompanied by candour and sincerity. For the first time, after his departure, Mina also uttered the sentence, "our unfortunate visit to the city." I was myself much struck with the young man's conversation, for hitherto we had only talked of our farming affairs, and I felt more than ever disappointed that there should be any obstacle in the way of his becoming my son-in-law. I thought even if I had been the dean I should have been glad to have so desirable a young man, and when my wife and Mina united in praising him, the one discanting on his good principles, and the other on his sweet smile and beautiful eyes, I said, "Well, do you not think that if Elizabeth could forget Wahlen she might be very happy with Jalymann?" "Ah," said Mina, "if she could forget, but she is not like other people; when once she loves, depend upon it it is for ever." "You are perfectly absurd, child, with your nonsense about eternal love," said I; and then, turning to my wife, I added, "should we not be happy, dearest, to see our child united to so excellent a man?" For the first time she did not reply, and I went on, "I still hope it may be brought about. Wahlen is, no doubt, a noble fine young man, but perhaps even now he is vexed with himself for having engaged Elizabeth in this labyrinth; they are both so young and innocent; and then the circumstances, their warm hearts, their highly-wrought imaginations, and old Mary's foolish conversation, with Annette's childish remark, led to the whole thing. I really feel sure that if he could but know all the

misery it has caused us he would release Elizabeth from her engagement; she would recover her spirits, and though, for a few months perhaps, she might still fancy herself devoted to him, I am very certain that such a man as Jalymann must aid in gaining the affections of any amiable girl, but especially of Eliza, who cannot help returning the love of everything that shows devotion to her; even her pigeons, which you may see at this moment surrounding her." And, as I looked out of the window, I beheld a beautiful white bird perched upon her shoulder, returning her caresses. "Oh, I hope, I hope we shall all be happy again." "Well, well, my dear, I do really think," said Augusta, "that it seems the will of providence it should be so, and certainly the young man is very prepossessing, sincere, and amiable." "And because he is so sincere, upright, and amiable, he is then to be deceived," said Mina, in an ironical tone; "this excellent young man comes to us in the simplicity of his heart, and we are to hide from him exactly that which it is of the most importance for him to be acquainted with—the heart of Elizabeth; if that is fair, mother——." "Hold your tongue," said I, in real anger. "But," said Charles, gravely, "it really does not seem legal or fair." His mother gave him a sign of approbation. "Perhaps, after all," said he, "the love of Elizabeth to Wahlen may not be of the extreme importance that we at present think it. Notwithstanding all the romances of Mina, in my opinion, the best plan will be openly to state the case to Monsieur Jalymann; if he still persists in his desire to marry Elizabeth, and Wahlen consents to give her up, our consciences will be at rest, and we shall then see who best understands the heart of Elizabeth, Mina or my father." "And what," said Mina, "if I should prove to be right, and our sister should be the victim, would not Charles then repent of his advice?" "I should not force Elizabeth," replied he, "she would still judge for herself." I reflected upon what Charles had said, and though I was fully convinced in my own mind that with time Elizabeth's feelings would gradually cool down, I inclined to adopt my son's advice, that we might find out what young Jalymann's notions would be. His simple, unromantic tone led me to expect he would agree with me, and I accordingly determined to take the first opportunity of speaking to him on the subject. Charles offered himself to do it, and also to communicate with his sister; but Mina said, "I altogether protest against it; Elizabeth's heart is not composed of the materials that your stoic philosopher's marbles are made of, and as for the other part of the question, remember it is a matter of very great delicacy." Charles, rather piqued, replied in a sententious tone, "I always imagined that openness, simplicity, and truth, were the basis of true delicacy, and worth all the turnings and windings of policy. What is it that has caused you all this misery for the last fortnight? is it openness? is it confidence? or mistrust and deception? answer me, Mina; and,

yet, I am sure we all love one another and doat upon our sister—but are we happy?” The truth of his remark struck us all. Of what value was our natural affection when there was not trust and confidence between us? It was settled then that I should be fully explicit with Jalymann whenever he again opened the subject to me. But, alas! our former harmony and happiness was not yet restored. Peace had departed from our dwelling, and, what was worse, from our hearts; and the poor girl, who was the main cause of it, was really the most innocent, and most to be pitied of all; and her presence always appeared to have the best effect upon us. Not one of us could have said a harsh word to her. She would have sacrificed to us everything to make us happy, whilst we none of us liked to think ourselves wrong, or to give up our own views and opinions to each other.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE GENEROUS RIVAL.

The next time that Jalymann called I took him into the garden, and as he was not long before he began to talk about Elizabeth, I informed him of the state of affairs, with regard to her affections. Though I softened down as much as possible, the strength of her attachment, and rather led him to hope that it would pass away, that Elizabeth had already promised to give up her engagement, and that I myself was convinced that time would do everything, the good young man sighed deeply, and cast down his eyes; he pressed his hands on his heart, and told how deeply this communication pained him; the tears came into his eyes, and after a few moments, in a broken and trembling voice, he said, “pardon me, my dear vicar, if my sufferings distress you, I only pray that your sweet Eliza may be as happy as it would have been the study and delight of my life to have made her; but you say there are obstacles to her union with the man she prefers; is it the want of money that interferes? Oh, my dear vicar, if you would give me some consolation, pardon me, but the half of my fortune is at your disposal.” He said this in such a modest, timid, and sincere tone, that I could not help taking his hand, which I warmly pressed to my heart. “This young man,” added he, “has given a fatal blow to my happiness, but if he renders Elizabeth happy I can forgive him; and I repeat it, that anything I have, which would contribute to that, is hers; but do not let her know it, do not let her feel under any obligation, only promote her happiness, and I shall have less of misery to suffer.” It is impossible to describe the delicacy, simplicity, and feeling with which this offer was uttered; I only wished from my heart that my daughter had heard him. I replied by giving him a detailed account

of the exact circumstances that had taken place between Elizabeth and Wahlen. His frankness and generosity had drawn out mine, and I no longer concealed anything from him; I even told him that my daughter, though fully convinced that she could never be happy, had agreed to give up her engagement and obey my wishes if I pressed her to become his wife. He started, and seemed only to have comprehended the latter part of my speech, for he exclaimed, "is it indeed true that she will consent to make me the most blessed of men?" I replied that it was only in obedience to our wishes, but that we could not press it whilst she continued to have any preference for another; but added, "I feel convinced that that preference will pass away, and that when she is fully acquainted with your worth and excellence she will give you her whole heart." He did not speak for some moments, but sighed deeply, and then said, with effort, "I see—when she has forgotten—when she can; but do you really think this is possible?—what makes you imagine it can be so?" "Because," replied I, "love, however violent it may be, is sure to pass away in time." He shook his head sadly, and then said, "if this young man, whom I neither know nor desire to know, loves as I do, if she feels for him in the least degree, if either the one or the other can cease to love, why it matters not then who one loves. In that case my love also may pass away! but no, dear vicar, that can never be; I feel, and I am sure it will last for ever. I should be ashamed of myself if I could think I desired any thing as ardently as I do this, and that I could be capable of changing. No, I am miserable, I am wretched; but I do not even wish to love less." I saw plainly that the young man's notions of love were exactly like my two daughters; but I calmly represented to him that when love is no longer fed by hope, letters, or the presence of its object, it must of necessity be extinguished. "But," said he, "how do you know this will be the case with Miss Bemrode? she may see this young man again, he may write to her." "No," replied I, "she has promised to do neither one nor the other, and I am certain she will keep her word, whatever pain she may feel." He caught at the word pain, and said, "pain, ah, no doubt, she must feel pain; I feel it. I know if she loved me as I love her, and I was forbidden to see her, or write to her, no power on earth would make me consent to it. No, no, dear vicar, though I love her beyond all, I can—though I am the most miserable of men—I will not make her miserable, whatever grief I may feel. I should suffer still more, dear excellent girl, were she made to suffer on my account." He put his hand up to his head, and holding out the other to me, he said, "dear vicar, revoke your prohibitions, and when you hear that my heart has ceased, that my life—when, when—my death—then tell your daughter—" He stopped, squeezed my hand vehemently, "no, no, tell her nothing; I would that nothing may ever trouble her happiness, for when that time arrives my sorrow

will be over—my love will be ended.” The anguish of his tone, the expression of his countenance, announced the intenseness of his feelings; his colour came and went, and the big tears rolled down his cheeks, and on his oppressed bosom; and, in fact, no one who had not witnessed his strong emotion could at all enter into all that I felt for him. He then wished to quit me, but I retained him, and said, in a broken voice, “dear and excellent young man, be still our friend. She will yet be yours; so pure, so ardent, so sincere a love must win its way. Elizabeth can have no hope of marrying your rival; he is a baron; his relations are as proud as Lucifer; both feel the impossibility of their union. Elizabeth will soon appreciate you, know your value, and regard you; I am sure of it, my son. My son, I will call you so, and entreat you not to leave me.” He pressed his hands upon his eyes, gazed upon me with a fixed look, and said, “well, well, I will, I will return; but not one word must be said to your daughter, either of my love or the hope you give me. Hope—I have none—but—but I will see her again—at least once more—and then—but—oh”—He then again squeezed my hand, which he bathed with tears, and we parted. I returned to the house, and found Elizabeth alone with my wife. I could not help exclaiming to her, “Oh, my child! what love—what devotion—what disinterested feeling—what a heart that young man has!” Just as I spoke, Mina entered the room: she was exceedingly serious, and the traces of tears were still visible in her red eyes. She walked straight up to her sister, who smiled and looked fixedly at her unusual appearance. Mina put her arms round her neck, and sobbed aloud. “What is the matter?” said her sister, much alarmed. “Oh! my dear, dear Elizabeth,” said she, “if you did but know how truly he loves you”—“So, then, you have been listening,” said I, just recollecting that during my walk with Jalymann I had overheard some noise in the arbour; “so you have been listening! Well, then, now tell your sister what a man he is, and what a heart he has.” “The most noble, the most generous, the best of men,” said she. “Oh! Elizabeth, if you did but know how he loves you!” She then told us all she had heard, and confessed that she had gone to the arbour on purpose, because she mistrusted me. “But, dearest papa,” said she, respectfully, and kissing my hand, “dearly as I love Elizabeth—different as my opinions have been from yours—I could never have spoken as well as you have done, and never could I have expected such feeling and sentiments as those of that excellent, that admirable young man. Elizabeth, I declare to you, I had the greatest trouble in the world to keep myself concealed. I longed to rush out and tell him, My sister cannot help loving you; she will love you; she would already, if she did but know you.”

We then recounted to my wife and Elizabeth all that had

passed; and Elizabeth listened, breathless and trembling, and with an air at first of embarrassment, but afterwards she seemed to have a sort of feeling of shame and annoyance at listening to the praises of a man, contrary to the interests of him to whom she was engaged. She tossed her head and listened to us with a kind of unperturbable air, and when we ended she said, "my dearest father, I am very miserable; I make the unhappiness of all connected with me, above all of this good man, and I grieve much to make an ungrateful return for such disinterested and generous attachment. I would to God," said she, with her hands raised up to heaven, "that Wahlen and I could forget each other; with what joy would I realize the happiness of my parents and that excellent, virtuous young man; but, dearest father, you must have patience. I fear, I fear I am destined only to cause the misery of all I love; oh that I might die rather. I am miserable, indeed I am; and even Mina is now turned against me." "Against you," said Mina, "no, no, Elizabeth, I am yours, and yours for ever; no, no, I love you infinitely more than you can possibly love me. Oh, Elizabeth, every one that comes near you loves you—you are the idol of all who approach you; no, even if you did not love me at all I should still adore you; but I must not say more, for indeed, indeed, I hardly know which of the two I now most wish for." I took the opportunity of speaking most warmly in praise of Jalymann. My wife, who was greatly moved by what I had related to her, warmly seconded me. Mina hardly knew what to say or do; she fixed her streaming eyes upon her sister and pressed her in her arms. Elizabeth was almost ready to faint, her countenance plainly showed the struggle of her heart; at last she said, "my dear father, I have already promised to sacrifice everything to your wishes, I do not retract my promise. You say I shall forget Wahlen, and that he also will forget me; if it is so I suppose I may be happy, but if not—Oh that he at least may be so, that he may not suffer what I——. Oh, my father, it seems that some, at any rate, must be unhappy, and that I am the cause of it. Oh, my father, there is my hand, do with me as you will." "Oh, how you tremble," said Mina. "And would it be any sacrifice if I did not?" said Elizabeth. "Oh, heavenly Father," said she, "guide me in what is right; accept the sacrifice of a child to her parents, and if a broken heart is to be offered up, accept of mine." I shuddered at this prayer; I dared not take her offered hand, and, in spite of all my preconceived theories, I could not help thinking her attachment to Wahlen really was imperishable. My wife also cried out in agony, "Elizabeth, draw back your hand—the sacrifice is wrong." Mina, on the contrary, took hold of it, and said, "Elizabeth, mind them not—uncertainty is worse than anything." "No, Elizabeth," said I, "no, I will not at this moment suffer you to decide; but, my sweet children," said I, "let us leave every thing to time

and providence, we will no longer torment ourselves uselessly as to the future. Let Jalymann come as he likes; accustom yourself to his society, look upon him as a brother, and leave it to circumstances to decide the matter, and see which of our predictions will be accomplished. If you do forget Wahlen, and I ardently hope it will be so, if some years elapse before you see him"—"If you are, for instance, nineteen or twenty years of age," said my wife, joyfully, and at the same time imprinting a tender kiss upon her forehead—"And if you do not forget him," said Mina, "I never will again trust in provi—" "Mina, Mina," said Elizabeth, putting her hand before her mouth, "is this transitory world alone all we have to look to—this passing moment of time? No, no, Mina, if I am doomed to disappointment here, have I not a tender earthly parent to support me? and even if all my earthly hopes fail, is this world alone all I have to look forward to? have I no hopes for the future—no better world to look to? Oh, Mina, Mina, what are you thinking of?" Mina shed tears of repentance in her sister's bosom, and said, "forgive me, dear, I knew not what I was saying." This conversation was useful in every way. We continued still to converse on the decrees of providence, and settled afterwards that at any rate Jalymann should come and see us from time to time, and that we would leave it to time to solve the mystery.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE ENGLISH READING.

The conversation, detailed in the last chapter, had much affected us all; but some how or other the poison of discord still remained in the cup, till an accidental circumstance had the happy effect of restoring the harmony we so ardently desired, but had not been able to attain. Being assembled one evening as usual in the common sitting room, my daughters spinning, their mother knitting, Charles amusing himself at the piano, and all of us occasionally conversing and enjoying his music, whilst the two little boys were preparing for me their English lesson, "I cannot understand it," said Wilhelm to Lewis, pushing the book away from him; "I cannot make it out at all." "Why it is very easy," said Lewis; and a warm dispute then arose; till at last they appealed to me, and Wilhelm read over the passage which follows: "What is it that sinful and corrupt man demands? he no longer pretends to hold the opinion of the ancients, and trust in fatality and a blind destiny, but he will not in its place acknowledge the eternal love of Divine Providence, as engaged in watching over us; but he chooses, on the contrary, to be governed only by the

insensate desires of his own heart. Is he happy? he attributes it entirely to his own wisdom, and, in the pride of his reason, considers himself a little less than a god. Is he unfortunate? he accuses the vices of his species, and inveighs against everything that does not at once fall in with his wishes and his unruly passions. There was really more of truth in the predestination held by the ancients than in this chance and uncertainty which now rules his actions, and which he makes use of to excuse himself in all his derelictions from duty. The ancients, indeed, imagined that, by the use of some magical words, they could stop the course of the sun and moon; but now-a-days men think that it only depends on their own will to change the immutable decrees of the Almighty, and make them yield to their projects and desires; whereas man was formed on purpose to obey. Nature has certain laws, from which she cannot depart; they were ordained by the great Creator and Preserver of all things, and our only wisdom is implicitly to acknowledge and submit ourselves to him. The physical world has its sure and certain order which it must follow. The moral world also is equally governed by laws, which are indisputable; the sanctuary of these laws is man's conscience. Obedience to these laws confers happiness and peace, for conscience is the voice of the Almighty, and when we depart from it we must of necessity be unhappy; the more closely we follow the voice of conscience the more happy and contented we are, and the less we attend to it and are guided by it the more we heap up misery for ourselves, and the more fallen, weak, and perverse we prove ourselves to be." I began to explain the meaning of the passage to Wilhelm, when it suddenly struck me that all my pretended submission to providence was, in reality, nothing else but an indolent throwing off of my own responsibility, and a passive expectation of things turning out according to my wishes. "Let me read now," said Elizabeth, taking the book from her brother. "Well, then, read loud," said they, and she went on, "Whatever may befall us in the common course of events, if we cannot avoid it by prudence, at least we may surmount it by patience, or conquer it by courage, or learn to bear it by custom. Strength of mind and fortitude will oppose to every physical evil the impenetrable barrier of resignation and hope, and, in such a case, quietness and composure, and a firm trust in a future and better world, are our best resource and our wisest course. But if man, by his own efforts, is able to turn away an evil, he should, in that case, look upon himself as the tool in the hands of providence, and then indolence and inaction would be a positive crime. He must set his shoulder to the wheel, taking council of his conscience, and acting with vigour and promptitude, and thus decide for the best." Elizabeth put down the book, she looked at us with a sweet smile, her countenance expressed how fully she coincided in what she had read. "Well, my dear child," said I, "let us

now adopt this good advice, and trust all that concerns us to Divine Providence, and then, whatever may be the result, if we are doomed to be unhappy, we shall know how to bear it; we may weep tears of resignation, but shall not look at one another with despair, or resist the decrees of the Almighty. Our hearts will no longer be torn with suspicion, or our actions be guided by deceit; and alas, for some time past, with the sole exception of Elizabeth, we have all, more or less, been in this unhappy state; I know for one I must plead guilty to it, and you, my poor Mina, also; but from henceforth I will conceal nothing from you, and I shall expect your implicit confidence in return. How should we feel, dear ones, if any one of us were suddenly cut off? should we not mourn and lament that there had ever been any misunderstanding between us? And, in a very few years, we must all pass away. Let us, then, give ourselves unreservedly to the Divine will, and whatever sacrifices we may be called upon to make, at least let our hearts be all united together, and let all trials be in common with one spontaneous movement." The whole party held out their hands. We mutually embraced each other; our hearts again beat in unison, and harmony and peace was completely restored.

It was not long before Jalymann came to visit us again; he was received by all of us with kindness and attention; even Elizabeth returned his salutation with one of those smiles so peculiar to herself; and his manner was such as to attract and win upon us all. Had he passed his whole life in the most polished and refined society he could not have shown more tact and delicacy: he paid no particular attention to Elizabeth, and most carefully avoided by word or action any allusion to what had passed; but I could not help at times hearing the deep sighs which involuntarily proceeded from him. It happened to be Elizabeth's week for managing the housekeeping, and she gracefully contrived to let the young man know this, that he might not suppose she avoided him. He conversed much with Mina, and his repartee, his judgment, and quickness of perception were so apparent that it was easy to see that he only wanted to mix a little in society to be exceedingly agreeable. In a serious conversation with my wife he acquitted himself with equal propriety; and, whilst he showed deep thought and reflection, he entered into the amusement of the younger ones in a manner becoming his age. Mina could not stop praising him after he left us, and she was also particularly struck with his dress, which combined the elegance of the town with the simplicity and ease proper to the country. She was greatly pleased with some tender and kind words which, though addressed to her, were evidently intended for Elizabeth; in fact, she skipped round the room with more vivacity than for a long while past, and said, "Oh happy we should be if,—if,—if."

Jalymann continually renewed his visits, and every day we wished

more and more that he could become a member of our family. At the first Elizabeth's manner towards him was cold, reserved, and, as it were, rather a kind of defiance; but, by degrees, this wore off, till at last she trusted him and spoke to him as if nothing had ever occurred between them. I could plainly perceive, however, how deeply painful it was to him to behave with indifference, and be obliged to restrain his real sentiments towards her. When he thought no one observed he would gaze at her for minutes together, his hand resting on his head, and deep sighs would escape from him; or he would watch her walking in the garden, or listen to the sound of her voice, and suddenly start and brush away a tear. Mina watched him closely and treasured up all she observed, to speak of it with praise and admiration to her sister. She had a peculiar gift of penetrating the thoughts, and drawing out the character; in fact, it was she who really made us fully understand and appreciate all the excellent qualities of the young man. Constantly she would draw her sister's attention by a slight cough, or some little movement on the table, which Elizabeth would pretend not to observe, though she often coloured crimson. At last one day she said, "it is no use my trying, Elizabeth, to make you perceive all his worth: I cough till I am hoarse, and really every day I feel more and more how excellent and amiable he is; and he never speaks without saying something to elevate the mind, touch the heart, and amuse and interest one; I assure you I ought to be like the index of the hand in my father's edition of Euripides, to mark all his noble sentiments. I cannot think how you can be so blind to his worth; why the very sound of his voice bespeaks his excellence"

All these attempts on Mina's part only made her sister more suffering and uncomfortable, and at last we began to think she made no secret to Jalymann of her interest in his behalf; they often walked together accompanied by Annette, and I often saw on her return traces of tears, and she eagerly repeated to her sister all he had said and done in the village, till she was compelled to stop her mouth by quietly kissing her lips, and begging her to spare her. The warm manner in which Mina had originally taken up the case of Wahlen had proceeded first of all from her having been in some measure the cause of the avowal and the promises which she made me in consequence of it, because she thought her sister's happiness would be sacrificed, and because in all the romances she had read love was described as eternal, and also because Wahlen was really an exceedingly attractive, elegant young man, and at the time she thought it was quite improper to meet with one who could compete with him; but from the time she had overheard Jalymann's conversation in the garden and witnessed his generosity, and the sublime devotion of his hopeless love, she judged that the man who was capable of such a sacrifice must be vastly superior to any one else, even Wahlen,

and therefore was most worthy of her sister. When she got to know him better, and found that he was as handsome and agreeable as he was generous, his secret grief interested her more and more. It must be remembered, too, that on the only two occasions on which she had ever been in company with Wahlen he had been so fully occupied with her sister that she had really seen nothing of him, whilst Jalymann, on the contrary, had devoted himself entirely to her (for her sister's sake no doubt); all these things together made a great impression on the lively imagination of Mina; and she soon infinitely preferred him to Wahlen. This change had been effected in her own mind in so short a time that she fully hoped it might be the same thing with her sister; but when after a while she perceived that she still continued to regard him with the same cold esteem, she determined to try all in her power to give her a true idea of his real merit, and as it were to force her to render him justice. "If she did but know him as I do," said she, "she could not help appreciating him;" and thus she was always repeating all he said, studying all that he did, getting possession as it were of his inmost thoughts, till at last, though she began only by occupying herself with him on her sister's account, she really was by degrees getting more and more entangled herself. Elizabeth, who in the main rendered full justice to Jalymann, and could not bear to contradict her sister, either kept silence, or coldly assented to what she said.

Things went on in this state for some time, till by insensible degrees Jalymann was drawn into confiding all his thoughts and feelings to Mina, and the poor girl was as insensibly, and unknown to herself, drawn on by his vivid descriptions, to entertain towards him the very sentiments he entertained towards her sister; but so completely did she deceive herself that she actually took for granted what she so much wished, and held out to the young man the delusive hope that her sister had begun to recognise and appreciate his devotion, and to be willing to return it. "Is it possible," said he; "am I really destined to such happiness? Oh Mina, Mina, repeat the delightful hope; tell me, tell me that I shall be blessed." The poor foolish girl called him her brother, and thought herself sure of bringing about that which she had taken upon herself to promise. That very evening she was more energetic than ever in her encomiums. She declared that his fortune and circumstance were the least things in his favour, and said no one but Elizabeth was worthy of him or he of her. "Oh, how happy would you be," said she, "to share all his joys and sorrows, to have such a being as he is devoted to you: how can you hesitate? I cannot comprehend how you can see so much of him and not be won over." Another day she said to her sister, "Oh how happy should we be if you like Jalymann—I would never marry, and we would all live

together, and we would walk together; he would read to us while we worked, and we would never separate." So vivid was the description which Mina would give of the domestic happiness she looked forward to, that Elizabeth sometimes could not help seeming to enter into it; but suddenly the thought of Wahlen would come across her, and with a deep sigh she would say, "Ah! if you could but have heard Wahlen speak of these things, ah! that would indeed have been happiness, Mina." "No, no," retorted Mina, "not half so happy; I know not why, but I am sure it is so; oh yes, I do know; for Wahlen would take you away, far away from home, and I only wish to live and die here." Thus the sisters continually made comparisons between the two young men. Elizabeth thought Mina very unjust towards Wahlen, and only loved him all the better for it. "You must confess," said she one day, "that he is infinitely more polished, and much better informed." "Well, these advantages he owes to his tutor and his birth; but Jalymann has more simplicity, energy, and manliness, and he owes everything to himself. How noble in his conduct—what delicacy, what tenderness." "Wahlen has much more conversation." "Yes, he talks like a book, but Jalymann always speaks with fervour, warmth, and decision; his expressions all come from his heart, not like Wahlen's, from his cultivated mind." "But how Wahlen writes." "Oh, his style is very perfect no doubt; but see how hearty, kind, and natural is this note which I have had from Jalymann this morning." "No doubt," said Elizabeth, "it is wonderful that a man in his position should have done so much for himself; and now Mina read the last I had from Wahlen, and tell me if anything can exceed the generosity, honour, simplicity, and delicacy of it." "Ah, no doubt," said Mina, laughing; "for it is from the lover to his beloved, whilst mine is only from one friend to another. I am sure Jalymann would write to you just as well if you would only let him;" "but you have not read mine," said Elizabeth. "Well," said Mina, returning the letter, "I only hope he feels all he says." "What do you mean?" said Elizabeth. "Why, in this passage"—and she read it aloud—"I feel from the very bottom of my soul, my Elizabeth, all that I owe you for the noble ingenuousness with which you confessed your love for me; but I should ill deserve this confidence or the happiness of being beloved by you if I could ever take an unworthy advantage of this avowal, which I owed solely to my ardent entreaties to the anguish of my mind, and to your kind sister's intercession. I am yours and yours for life, my Elizabeth! The tie which binds us nothing can ever dis sever, for it is formed by that which is the surest and most sacred bond for a virtuous heart—esteem, gratitude, and duty, which binds me to you as strongly as your loveliness and my constancy. No power on earth shall ever break that bond, or prevent me from consecrating my life to you, even if you

"yourself were to change, which I never can believe, or to give up your engagement with me. I should still look upon myself as irrevocably yours. Could I ever forget this vow, I should look upon myself as the vilest of men. But, my Elizabeth, this oath does not tie you down; I leave you free; for my declaration to you was spontaneous on my part, whereas yours was surprised from you, and yet you do love me—I am convinced of it. I could read every thought of that heart so unsophisticated and devoid of artifice, but it is possible some unforeseen circumstance may arise to make you regret your promise, and to wish you had never met me. In such a case, my Elizabeth, your happiness is my first and only wish, to be yours is the one great object and hope of my life; but still it is subservient to that. Oh, that the Almighty may grant it to us together to be blessed with a true and faithful love; but should it be otherwise, should cruel fate interfere to prevent it, should you ever wish to cancel your engagement, you are free; and may you be happy in forgetting me. I say this because our situations are so different. I have no father, no mother, no brother or sister, nothing to prevent me from being wholly yours, and my love is all absorbed in you; but you have parents and many other ties, and I ask nothing from you but the frank avowal of your own wishes; in short, that you may be happy; for dreadful as it would be to me to lose you, I would not for the universe be the cause of sorrow to you—my hands tremble whilst I write—but I do so deliberately; and if at any time the dreadful trial which my fears anticipate should occur, send me back my letter, which would be your justification without putting you to the pain of writing, and I should, I trust, be able to bear it like a man. It is because I so deeply love you that I say this, and because your happiness is more to me than all the world besides."

"Well," said Elizabeth, weeping bitterly. "Well," said Mina, "he is quite right, there is a great difference in your situations!!" Why, in any case there may be a hundred reasons why a woman should wish to change; it is quite a different case with men." "How so, Mina, I cannot see it at all; why, I should be perfectly inexcusable if I had the slightest wish to change." "Why, in the first place you know it is always the man who makes the offer, who selects and forms the engagement." "Ah," said Elizabeth, "but I had preferred him even before he spoke to me." "I don't believe it, sister, a young woman never does so. A secret instinct tells her that she is beloved; but even if it were so she would never acknowledge it; the lover always does propose and draw out the confession from the lady; he makes vows to her, and spares no pains to obtain the confidence of a credulous and simple being, and therefore he is bound, and she is not." "I am, I am bound," said Elizabeth. "No," said Mina, "you are not, for Wahlen himself dissolves your engagement; why, good

heavens, only look to it, he will console himself, he will as he says himself bear it like a man. You will just fancy you have had a pleasant dream, and you will only esteem him all the more for his disinterestedness; but if, on the other hand, it is the man who breaks the engagement, who disappoints the poor girl whose affections he has engaged, who leaves her blighted, despised, and rejected by him whom she had looked up to as her support and guide. Ah, Eliza, a man it is true may deeply feel and be broken hearted by a disappointment in his love, but women alone die of such disappointments. If you had read some of my romances you would know all this without my telling you, poor girl." (Poor girl yourself, might well have been retorted upon her.) But she continued to urge her point, and said, "why you perceive he actually contemplated the very circumstance that has occurred. The most complete happiness is offered to you; oh, do not reject it—make us all happy. Read here again, 'The first wish of my heart is to see you happy.' Oh, Eliza, enclose back this letter in a cover, return it to Wahlen, and his earnest desires will be accomplished; you will be a most blessed wife, and I the most pleased and delighted girl in the world." "And his generous kindness is to be thus rewarded," said Elizabeth. "What generosity!" said Mina, "I see no such great generosity in permitting you to be happy, and to cause happiness to others, when it is utterly impossible you can ever make his; and if you think that deserves gratitude, what can you think of the conduct of Jalymann, who would have given my father half he possessed to enable you to marry Wahlen; and yet you have nothing better to bestow upon him than cold pity and compassion." "A heart full of esteem for him, Mina, ready to sacrifice to him all my dreams of happiness, and, if his wishes are accomplished, if I ever do become his wife, a fidelity beyond all shocks, and a confidence without limit. But Mina, Mina, do not be always adding to my sorrow and my uncertainty. My heart is full of anguish. I love Wahlen; God alone knows which of the two is the most generous and noble—but that is not the question; it is to whom have I plighted my faith and given my heart. Mina, Mina, you may make me wretched, but do not make me perjured. A pure, honest, and faithful heart is the only comfort I have; leave it to me." They wept together; quitted each other perfectly reconciled, but both were depressed and uncomfortable.

By degrees the constant repetition of the subject began silently to work upon Elizabeth. Jalymann almost lived in the house; he was constantly doing some kindness to one member or other of the family; and Elizabeth could not refuse her friendship to a person to whom we were all under obligations; in fact, she had begun to look upon him as a sort of younger brother; at last she so far yielded to her sister that she confessed she wished she had known him before she ever saw Wahlen; and we drew her on still further to say she would have been glad that she had never met

him. "Now then," said Mina, "our ardent wishes will be accomplished; take courage, Elizabeth, make use of that permission which Wahlen himself gave you; enclose back his letter, and gratify all our wishes." We did not understand her; Elizabeth shuddered, and said, "What if my heart should break in sealing it, Mina? Leave things alone, Mina. We are at this moment happy," said she; "hope is still before us, and our happiness under the thick veil of the future; I would that I could stop the wings of time. Heaven alone knows what may be in reserve for me. Now, now, at least, I am innocent; I cannot accuse myself of infidelity or perjury. Oh, sister, press me not; any resolution at this moment taken might be followed by years of remorse. Oh, think, think, my beloved parents, of what you are about; advise me no more. It is not the concern of a moment, it is for life; either a life of innocence and happiness, or a life of misery and despair. Oh, my God, let suffering come upon me, if it be thy will, but not remorse. Oh, let me, let me," said she, with more vehemence than I had even seen in her before, "let me decide my own fate; press me not; say nothing; tell me not either what you do or do not wish, and reproach not yourselves hereafter with the misery of your child. I know not what to be at. I am torn by two conflicting duties, and cannot choose. If I alone were concerned I should have no difficulty; but it is not so." She left the room. For some moments we were all silent, and Mina then stood up, and said, "I have done with it; I will meddle no more whichever she shall choose. I will love him as a brother."

The next day Elizabeth's conduct surprised us; she had not only recovered her accustomed serenity, but appeared more cheerful than usual, and conversed with Jalymann with ease, and even with gaiety. He was so enchanted he could hardly contain his transports; he seemed to have eyes and ears for no one else. He scarcely answered Mina, who spoke to him at one time with earnestness, at another with her usual drollery; but he actually returned her jokes with a degree of sharpness which surprised me. From this day the two young people seemed to have come to a sort of understanding; they even walked out together, which before they had never done. Mina had imparted to me Wahlen's letter, and I thanked heaven that matters appeared to be coming to the point that I wished.

But now there was another trouble. Mina, the gay, thoughtless Mina, whose vivacity had hitherto been the life of the whole house, became suddenly exceedingly serious, or rather, I should say, most variable in her humours, for she suddenly passed from extreme melancholy to the most flighty spirits; but they were so forced and unnatural, that we were all struck by them. After talking with the greatest eagerness, she often became silent, ca-
cious, and even cross; and if we asked her what ailed her, she

would reply by a laugh that startled us, and more than once set her sister crying. In vain we sought to account for this strange conduct; we could not possibly divine it; and her ill humour at times was so great, that I was even forced to reprove her for it. Elizabeth was the only one who never suffered from these ebullitions, and we begged her to try and discover the source of her grief. She returned after a little while, bathed in tears, and trembling with agitation. Mina had at first tried to turn her off with laughing and joking; but when her sister implored her to open her heart to her, she threw herself into her arms, and bursting into tears, said, "Oh, leave me, leave me—every word is a dagger; have patience with me, and bear with me; this will all pass off; but in heaven's name ask me no more—it is nothing but caprice—it will all go off if you do not notice it." Elizabeth finished by entreating us all not to take any notice, but to forgive the poor girl her ill humour. We, alas! little guessed that it all arose from the unfortunate circumstances in which she had been thrown so continually with Jalymann. She was herself totally ignorant of it; and in pressing her sister to marry him, that she might live with them, she had thought only of her sister, as she imagined, but when she found Elizabeth's altered conduct towards him had broken the link between her and him, and that he turned from her when she addressed him, the veil was torn from her eyes; then she looked upon him as an ungrateful being, and retiring to her chamber thought over all that had taken place for some weeks past, and perceived, with shame and distress, that her heart was filled with jealousy, and that she had been cherishing, unknown to herself, a secret attachment, whilst she thought she was only occupied with her sister's interests. After going on in the most unhappy state for several weeks, avoiding Jalymann as much as possible—seeing the progress of what she had so earnestly coveted—the gradual progress which he was making in her sister's esteem—and enduring many conflicts with her own heart—and her sense of maiden modesty—she at last came to the resolution fully to open her mind to Elizabeth, and request her advice. She accordingly one day sought her in her own apartment, and, having entered it, said, with a deep sigh, "Elizabeth!" "Well, dearest sister!" replied she, letting fall the hand upon which her head had been resting when her sister entered. "Well, dearest sister, can you believe it—but something has happened so extraordinary—my heart is really a riddle to me—but—I love poor Wahlen—but to-day—Jalymann has—I really do not know how—but I—I have just promised him—Oh, Mina, how happy you will be—I have just told him—said—that I would—would marry him." Mina was ready to faint; she clasped her hands together; she put them on her oppressed heart, and then, after a long pause, in which the two sisters never looked at each other, Mina, with a hoarse, trembling voice, after

two or three attempts, said, "Then you do really love him?" She was silent, and almost dropped on the ground. "Yes, yes, I feel sure that I do," said Elizabeth, hesitating, and her words completely crushed the unhappy Mina. She tried to conceal her pale, faded face in her hands, but the effort was too much, and she was unable to articulate a word. "I have long," said Elizabeth, "appreciated his worth—and to-day—I could no longer refuse him—but, Mina, you can have no idea of all his delicacy; never was there a man who loved like him. I know him now; I see the truth of all you told me; I see and I feel that heaven has destined him for me; his character and his condition of life are exactly suited to my happiness. If Wahlen had been able to overcome all the difficulties, or had he married me without the consent of his family, I should not have been happy. So brilliant a condition, with a title, riches, and luxury, are not suited to me; my simple, timid character would be out of place. A farm and a good husband, like Jalymann, who can enter into and enjoy my quiet pursuits, is much more suited to me than a fine drawing-room, where I should feel quite out of place. Wahlen, no doubt, would have enjoyed this sort of life, too, but—but, alas! his birth prevented the possibility of it. I did love him—if it were possible I should do so now—but his position and name always made me tremble. Now that I know I shall always remain in the sphere in which I was born, and whose habits I am used to, I am happy. I dread only the idea of putting a seal to that letter, and sending it back to Wahlen—but I must do so. Oh! sister, sister, the dear friend of Jalymann, help me, help me! reassure my heart! speak to me of happiness—set it before me, that I may still believe in it." She threw herself into her sister's arms, but the wretched girl could hardly reply, "You are happy—you will be happy—no one knows it better than I do." "It is to you, to you only, that I owe it, Mina; and to you only have I opened my heart"—"and to him, to him," said Mina. "No, no, not fully; only by a smile and returning the pressure of his hand,—but to you I have told every thing. Oh! Mina, Mina! shall I be happy?" "Yes—happy, happy Elizabeth!" "Are you satisfied, my Mina? Shall I now see the clouds disperse from your brow? tell me, tell me, Mina!" At this question Mina cast down her eyes, but deliberately replied, "Yes, yes." "Ah!" said Elizabeth, "that is all I wish. I have no desire but to render you all happy; all that is dark will clear away; all that is sad will be obliterated. I will be happy, Mina, and you shall see it; and it is to your wise advice I owe it." At this moment Mina squeezed her sister's hand in a convulsive manner, which at first she took for a caress; but turning away she heard her say, "See it! no, no, that cannot be. I witness it! no, never!" "Mina! Mina!" said Elizabeth, astonished, "what do you mean? Not less my happiness! Oh, heavens! how pale you are; what is

the matter, dear, dear Mina?" "Oh," said Mina, stammering with confusion, "my health, my weakness—I only meant—I could not appear in scenes of happiness and joy. Be happy, Elizabeth! You will be so—I am sure of it—I pray for it—but I shall never witness it." Elizabeth on her knees implored her sister to tell her what was the matter with her. Mina hardly knew how to reply to her. Once or twice she was on the point of telling her her fatal secret; but now that she thought her sister had become really attached to Jalymann, and that she had consented to marry him, nothing could have induced her to confess it; she felt, however, that it was absolutely necessary to give some explanation; she accordingly thought for a moment, and then coming close to her sister, she said, "Well, then, Elizabeth, since you will know, I will tell you: one evening, between sleeping and waking—I hardly know whether it was a dream or an apparition—I beheld my guardian angel"—"Oh, you were dreaming, Mina." "Well, Elizabeth, think at any rate that I saw him;—he was beautiful, and crowned with flowers—he smiled, and held out his hand as if to bless me—my heart beat with tender emotion—suddenly I saw the roses in his crown wither away, one after another—his celestial face became pale and dark, like death—his extended hand drawn back, with a sad and mournful look, which almost upset my reason. I thought, too, I heard him say, 'Unhappy child, I pity you; Oh, how sad you will be; and I must quit you for ever;' and with these words he vanished, and left me in profound darkness. Ah, sister, these dreadful words still rest upon me—they are constantly in my ears—it is true my guardian angel has abandoned me, and my heart is oppressed with grief." She was silent, and leaned her head upon her sister's shoulder. "Dear child," said Elizabeth, trying to smile, "It is all a dream—a mere trick of your imagination." "Oh, but that is not all," said Mina—"there was a fearful abyss open before me, and into that abyss my guardian angel plunged himself. Above me shone forth the firmament in all its glory—suns, stars, moons, innumerable worlds. I regarded them with admiration, and hope again returned to my bosom; but one sun after another, one moon after another, and all the stars, one by one, fell also into the fearful abyss; all creation was dissolved, and I was left alone in total darkness; then I heard from the abyss a fearful voice, crying out, 'You, too, will fall into this abyss, and then all will come to an end—there will be no more bright sunshine, no awakening for Mina—like your guardian angel you will pass away,' and the next moment I felt myself vanish like a vapour; and, Oh, my Elizabeth, what does all this portend?" In this frightful dream the unhappy girl had given a picture of the state of her mind, and then covering her face with her hands, she stopped short. "Oh, wretched girl," said her sister, "you must do not doubt of the immortality of your soul." She

her trembling arms, and began to utter rapidly a hundred reasons to prove the certainty of another life, and to re-establish her faith. Mina was not sorry she had taken up this notion, and thus not found out the true reason of her grief. She listened to all her sister said, and only replied, "Oh, I am unhappy, I am unhappy! and nothing can render me otherwise." They cried themselves to sleep; and the next morning I awoke full of happiness, for in taking leave of us the evening before, Jalymann looked so satisfied, and took leave of my wife with such a tender expression, that I felt convinced the young people had at last come to an understanding. But how presumptuous we are, and prone to take to ourselves the merit of all success. I attributed it entirely to the sagacity with which I had conducted the affair, and this thought doubled my satisfaction. I gave Charles a lecture on serenity and contentment of mind, and told him it was always our duty not only to support minor troubles but also real misfortunes with patient resignation; for, said I, every thing really turns out for our good; we have but to wait and conduct ourselves with prudence; and, I added, with an air of triumph, I really believe there is no misfortune or trouble that can befall us which, at the end of twenty years, will not have proved a blessing; or at any rate, that the memory of it would be forgotten. In fact, what is there we do not forget? Why, however great a sorrow may be, it either passes away, or those who suffer from it pass away themselves. "There are some sorrows, my dear," said my wife, "which do not pass away." "It would be difficult to name them," said I. "Why, we have had some sharp ones, and have shed some bitter tears over them. No, believe me, the faculty of forgetfulness is a very great blessing; and thanks be to God, love, if that is not in our power, we may look to a better world; in a few short years, at the most, the most painful trial is ended; and, if our hopes are rightly fixed, the tomb is only the entrance to greater joys and more enduring happiness." Just at that moment, Elizabeth, pale, agitated, and haggard, entered the room, and looking fixedly at me, I said, "Oh! my child! what is the matter? You have some trouble to impart to us." "The greatest that could befall us," said she. "Mina, our dear Mina!" She approached me, and told me she wished to speak to me. I went with her into a recess of the room, and waited in terror till she spoke: "Oh! my dear father!" said she, "I tremble for Mina's reason—her secret grief comes from her mind—she doubts—she doubts the immortality of her soul." Her words rather relieved me—not that I thought lightly upon the subject, far from it—but I felt sure we should be able to apply a remedy. I sent the children out of the room; my wife anxiously enquired what was the matter, and Eliza repeated the conversation of the preceding evening, and the melancholy despair of her sister. My wife bitterly wept over the sorrows of her daughter, espe-

cially the fearful dread of Mina's reason being affected. I thought deeply on the different arguments with which I should combat her unhappy delusion. Charles took down Cicero, and began to look for the passage on the contempt of death, and asked Elizabeth what reasons she assigned; she replied, "none." "What," said Charles, "none! Why, how can we believe, or disbelieve, without being able to assign a reason?" "Ah! Charles," said Elizabeth, "nothing is easier. I remember one fine evening in the spring, walking in the garden—the whole vault of heaven was spangled with stars—a nightingale was singing in the shade—my heart beat with joy and emotion, and I felt more convinced of the existence of God at that moment than during any of our philosophic lessons." "What nonsense!" said Charles; "the singing of a bird and the joyful beating of your heart." "No, Charles," said Elizabeth, "it is no nonsense," raising her eyes to heaven, "for if a little bird, full of love to her young ones, sings to amuse them on her nest, and a human heart feels that love, and traces it up to its source, believe me, Charles, if such a reflection as that does not lead us to believe in the truth of revelation, none of your books of philosophy will ever do it." "Dear Elizabeth, you throw away the grain with the husk; it is right for the head to be stored as well as the heart; reason and faith may go together." "Ah! but, my dear father, I was only saving Mina from the dry arguments of Charles. I know by experience cold and methodical arguments, which say a thing is so and so because such a thing is so and so, is all useless. A tear, a caress, an earnest prayer to our Heavenly Father, and the love of our Saviour, these are what will best bring her back. I have often myself shuddered when I have heard cold reasonings and arguments respecting another life, just as if people were discussing what the weather would be to-morrow. No books of argument could ever have convinced me; but the beautiful works of nature, the marvels of creation, the sun, the flowers, the birds, the meanest insect, all proclaim the wonders of his power and his love. He is good, he is almighty, and every thing shows forth his beneficence. I entreat you, Charles, speak not to her on these subjects; her dream for the present has troubled the tranquillity and balance of her mind; let us all redouble our tenderness towards her, speak to her of the love of God, and read the Bible with her, and her equanimity by degrees will return, and she will be happy again."

Charles was strictly forbidden to let Mina know that he was even acquainted with her secret; and my wife and I also resolved to leave her entirely to the judicious tenderness of Elizabeth. When she came down stairs she complained much of head-ache, lassitude, and palpitations, which affected her breathing. We all sympathised with her, and though her mother at first shewed some degree of vexation in her countenance, (for she could not

understand how a girl so brought up could possibly admit any doubts into her mind,) yet when she beheld the look of suffering, and saw the poor girl crushed as it were with the struggle going on within her, pity took the place of displeasure, and she showed herself even more kind and tender than usual towards her. Charles also, even in his very tone of voice, was unusually affectionate; and several times, in relating any thing, he would address himself particularly to her. Elizabeth did not tell her sister that she had spoken to us, therefore there was no need particularly to allude to the subject; but she could hardly help seeing we were acquainted with what had passed; for, in our reading, whenever the words eternity, death, or the soul occurred, we could not avoid laying especial emphasis upon them. We none of us could eat any breakfast, and when I retired to my study I thought over and took down several books which I thought would afford me convincing arguments, but after some time I pushed them all aside, and thought of what Elizabeth had said about the spirit of love working on the heart, and the words of Divine Truth to guide and direct us aright. In the meanwhile Elizabeth had been talking to her sister in a manner which, if she really had entertained the doubts we supposed, would have been most judicious, but in the real state of the case did not answer. They had strolled together into the little wood of hazels, and Elizabeth had made her remark all the richness and beauty of the autumnal tints, to which her sister, in a melancholy tone, had assented, though she only could see the falling leaves, the faded flowers, and the decay of vegetation. Her observations drew forth tears from her sister, who immediately regretted what she had said, and begged her to bear with her and have patience and indulgence with her. They sat down on an old stump, with their hands clasped in each others, and then Eliza began to speak of their childish days, their little games together, and recalled such tender recollections, that Mina's countenance relaxed into a sweet smile, and they talked of the deep affection they had always had for each other. Elizabeth, warmly pressing her hand, said, "I do not remember our ever having had a quarrel, Mina; at least, never for a quarter of an hour together." "Even then," said Mina, "it never went beyond our tongues and our little hands." "Our hearts were always true; and I am sure I always loved you more passionately, when I felt I had annoyed you, even than before; and we always had exactly the same tastes, Mina; we always liked exactly the same people." Mina's head immediately dropped on her sister's shoulder, and the melancholy shade returned upon her countenance. Elizabeth did not notice it, and said, laughing, "What noble sacrifices we used to make for one another." Poor Mina gave a deep drawn sigh. Alas! thought she, how little does she think of that which I am making now. "And thus will it always be, dear sister, will it not?" continued Elizabeth; "for ever we will

be united in the same sweet bond of unity, and look beyond the tomb to an eternity of happiness." With a look and expression of great tenderness she continued to expatiate on the delight it would be to live together. It was indeed for that alone that she had first entertained the idea of marrying Jalymann, and she now said so to her sister. "Dear Mina, I can thank you for having so strongly urged it upon me." Every word pierced like a dagger, till at last the unhappy girl faintly murmured, "Let me entreat you, dear sister, not to defer your marriage, that I may at least have the comfort of seeing you blessed." Elizabeth promised her, striving to hide the emotion that her words cost her; not that she really thought her sister's life in danger—for she attributed the idea to the melancholy that had seized upon her, but that very melancholy made her wretched. Neither was she herself at all as free from sorrow as she would have her sister suppose. Though Jalymann's intense devotion for her was felt with great gratitude, yet she could not forget the superior attractions which Wahlen had possessed in her eyes; notwithstanding all her efforts to forget him, she could not help wishing still that she had been permitted to wait, to see if time would not make an alteration in his favour. Although she was induced by her affection to Mina to act as she had done, Mina was fully persuaded that she really did love Jalymann, and was therefore more and more determined to keep her own secret. They returned into the house fatigued, dispirited, and weary with their mutual efforts at self-sacrifice. So perfectly true is it that, without mutual confidence, the most exalted and tender friendship is liable to create misery, instead of comfort. Mina, with immense self-devotion and determination, resolved to shut up in her own heart her unhappy attachment, and assume as much as possible her former manner. The very next day, as soon as she awoke, she said, "Eliza, my good genius has returned to me; I again dreamed of him to-night. The roses in his garland were more fresh and beautiful than ever, the stars shining forth with double brilliancy; and I seemed to hear his voice, declaring that he would never again quit me. He pointed to heaven, and said he would lead me there: he then gave me the most beautiful of his roses, which I at once handed to you, and we were all again happy." Elizabeth was filled with joy, and the two sisters came down to breakfast arm in arm: their different aspect delighted me, and Elizabeth made me a sign to shew me all was right. I felt myself as if a thick, dark cloud had been removed from over my head; but I imagined still that it was my duty, now that her sister had worked upon her heart, to strengthen her principles by sound reason; and accordingly, when the rest retired, I withheld her, and said, "My dearest child, I am acquainted with the cause of your grief; Elizabeth told me of your dream." She turned exceedingly pale, took my hand, trembled all over, and said, in a mournful, hesitating

voice, "I am glad that she told you." I thought this a good preparation for my sermon, and began to set forth all my arguments with great force, when she interrupted me, and said, "Oh, dear father, when you press me to your heart, and call me your child, with so much tenderness, is not that enough for me? Do I not see in your paternal love a type and pledge of that of my Heavenly Father? Surely that gracious being would not be less tender towards me than you are!" I said, "God, my dear child, consoles and strengthens the broken hearted." "Ah, yes," said she, "and my heart is broken; but he will not reject me."

From that day Jalymann spent all his time with us, and Mina had the courage to be continually present. She strongly urged her sister not to delay, which, under various pretexts, she still continued to do, and this prolonged the poor girl's misery, who awaited the consummation of her fate like a condemned criminal. I backed up her wishes myself, but my wife still kept on about her extreme youth, and said that every day gained was an advantage; in vain did I seek to combat her prejudices. I always counted my daughter's age with the current year, whilst Augusta only allowed the one that was passed; therefore with me she was 20, whilst with her mother she was but 18, and in reality she had attained her 19th year. Before us poor Mina had resumed nearly all her gaiety without her petulance; she spoke but little, and we attributed the difference in her character to the advance of her reason, whilst it really was the effect of a courageous and generous strength of mind; but her incessant efforts undermined her health, and the roses disappeared gradually from her cheeks, and the brightness from her eyes. Jalymann at last remarked it, and communicated his fears to us; we questioned her on the subject, but she stoutly denied that anything was the matter, and redoubled her cares to impose upon us by her cheerfulness, though she felt fully convinced herself that she was making rapid strides to her grave. Elizabeth also became more and more pale, and changed visibly. We noticed it to Jalymann, and when he spoke to her about it, she said it was caused by her anxiety for her sister. Never did I pass so sad a winter, or feel so sad a presentiment of evil; it made me even more anxious that Elizabeth should be settled. On the day before Christmas none of the children thought of the accustomed presents; they all knew how badly off we were; we had long since sold the carriage for half what we gave for it, and made use of the money for absolute necessities; and we looked forward to this St. Silvester's day, which had always before been so joyfully greeted by us, with melancholy and sad forebodings. One child was visibly declining before our eyes; another about to engage in the marriage state, with a partner chosen by us instead of herself; we had no heart or power to wish one another a happy Christmas. I was seated at a table on which four candles were placed, and in the midst

our Christmas tree, on which were hung a few trifles for the little ones, which their sisters, even the dying Mina, had occupied the cold winter nights in working for them when they had gone to bed. The poor little things were at first overjoyed, but when they saw my sad face they appropriated their little gifts, and each extinguished one candle, so that only one was left. "How different is this from the happy St. Silvester's days we used to have," said I. These sad words at once decided Elizabeth. She looked at me with a sweet smile, and left the room with her sister. She took all the letters she had ever received from Wahlen, folded them up in paper, took a wafer, and looked for a seal. With streaming eyes she laid it down and took it up again. Her sister, who had been intensely watching her, faintly asked her what was the matter. "I must, I must put up this letter—you know the one I mean, Mina. Oh! Mina, I——" She heard a slight sound, looked up, and saw her sister just ready to faint: to run to her, and catch her in her arms, was the affair of a moment. Mina got better, smiled, and begged her not to be alarmed; told her she often felt thus, and that it would pass away. Elizabeth was so frightened that she was nearly as bad as her sister; she found it quite impossible to resume her occupation; she begged her sister to write the address, and said, "Mina, I cannot do it." Mina took up the pen and wrote with firmness, though she looked upon it as signing her own death-warrant; she then left the room, and went out into the garden. The cold freshness of a December night, the brilliant stars, and the frozen, winterly brightness which was so calm and beautiful, tranquilized her agitated feelings, and she rejoined her sister, composed and happy.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LAST DAY OF THE OLD YEAR.

On the last day of the year, Charles was sitting with his elder sisters, and wishing to rouse them by a little joke, he said, "We ought to bid adieu to an enemy with more of charity than we part with this year." "Ah!" said Elizabeth, "this year! this cruel year!" "Oh!" said Charles, "there ought to be at least two days in which we should determine to be happy, the last day of the old year, and the commencement of the new one." Charles went on philosophising and trying to interest them, but in vain. I also tried, after dinner, to direct the thoughts of my children to the number of happy days we had enjoyed together. "Oh, my dear," said my wife, "do not talk about them, it will only make us still more sad." "But," said I, "we may have many, many more to be grateful for. He, whose goodness and mercy have so

long followed us may still see fit to cause a bright gleam of hope and sun-shine again." "He will! he will!" said Elizabeth, who moved towards the window to hide her tears. Just then Jalymann came in; she took him by the hand and led him up to me saying "here dear father is a son, an excellent son, whom your Elizabeth presents to you." I held out my hand to bless him, when a cry from Charles directed our attention to Mina, who had fallen senseless on the floor. After a few moments she got better, but could only feebly entreat us to take her to her room; her mother and sister accompanied her, and soon after Jalymann went home. I went to the window, and remained for some time lost in sad and sorrowful reflections. At last the clock struck twelve: the old year was gone. I almost felt as if it would announce the parting sigh of my poor child, and broken-hearted and oppressed I fell upon my knees to pour out my sorrows to the Almighty, and thus ushered in the first day of the new year.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

It is always doubly sad to bear misfortune or sorrow on a day marked out for happiness. On Sundays and festival days even the poor negro has some relaxation; but we all rose on this new year's day with sad and anxious hearts. The weather was bright and clear; the frost and snow, on which the sun shone fair and bright, sparkled like diamonds; but my thoughts were full of sad forebodings. My wife softly entered my chamber as if afraid to awaken me to a sense of my grief; her pale face and trembling lips plainly shewed me what a care-worn night she had passed. She looked at me, but did not as usual wish me a happy new year, for it seemed as if it would be a mockery. I looked at her and said "dear Augusta, you wish me nothing because you hope for nothing." "God grant us patience," said she, with her hands clasped together, "and courage," said I. "Patience, dear one," said she. "Patience, that is what I pray for. Mina is very, very ill, but there is something underneath all this that I cannot understand. Elizabeth is very ill also, almost as ill as her sister." "I will go and see them," said I, and I was just about to do so when Augusta said "do not go now, dearest, remember you have got to preach." "That is the very reason" said I, "why I wish to see them first. How would it be possible for me to ascend my pulpit till I had first seen my poor children?" I went up to them and found Mina in a state of extreme drowsiness, but with every appearance of fever; Elizabeth was seated by her side, pale as ashes, holding her sister's hand, and not even noticing

my approach; the other four children who had followed me remained at the door, and watching the scene with stifled sobs; my own feelings were quite overpowered, and I soon retired to my room to try and compose myself for preaching. I had chosen the subject of submission to the Divine will, and alas, I felt in my own heart how painful and difficult it was. 'The autumn had been exceedingly unfavourable for the harvest, fearful hail-storms had destroyed the crops, I had myself suffered much in my own farm, and I had composed my sermon with reference to this visitation; but my whole mind was so thoroughly prostrated by my anxiety for my children that I found it impossible to nerve myself to a proper condition for going through my duty; I looked out and beheld the sun shining brightly; but I could only think of those dear ones who perhaps would soon never see it again. I heard the painful breathing behind the curtains and saw nothing but the eyes of my wife and children suffused with tears. I heard the school-master say to my wife after I had told him of my anxiety, "Oh, you may depend upon it she will come round, I know what fevers are—faintings, palpitations, too much blood in the system—I will stake my reputation that in three days she will be better." My poor Augusta seized with avidity the hope thus given her, and said "our good neighbour feels sure all will go well, do you not, neighbour?" "Oh yes," said the old man, and he immediately related a dozen instances in which he had seen a rapid recovery take place. I went off to church much more tranquil, but the subject of my sermon so vividly brought back my thoughts to my beloved child that I could not help saying, "how apt are we to consider the misfortunes which happen to ourselves as the most difficult to bear, instead of gratefully thinking of those greater evils which we are mercifully spared. When your harvest was destroyed by the fearful hail storms how much worse would it have been if to each of you one of your children had been suddenly cut off. Could your complaints have been more bitter, or your murmurs more loud, than when the hail destroyed your crops? and yet God in his goodness may amply make you amends next harvest, and fill your garners with plenteousness; but no other child can make up to the tender mother for the one she has lost. Another may fill its place in the family circle, but the one that is carried off to the tomb can never be forgotten; it will always seem to her to have been the most lovely, the most worthy of being beloved. Oh, then, shed not tears for those evils that may be repaired, but be grateful and thankful that you have not been called upon to weep for those dear ones, who, if they had been struck by the fearful pestilence which sometimes visits our earth, would be lost to your endearments and leave a vacuum in your affections which nothing could replace. Be grateful for the mercies you have left. Trust yourselves in His hands, who commands the winds and the storms,

and who pities and feels for his people in all their trials, and rejoice you have not at this moment the shadow of death hanging over your house." Saying these words I almost imagined I beheld my Mina wrapped in her winding sheet. I thought I beheld her myrtle garland with the gold leaves hanging on the wall before me, and tears choked my utterance. I was hardly able to conclude my sermon, but was compelled to stop for a moment before I could proceed. I however offered up a most fervent prayer for my parishioners. On reaching home as I went up the stairs to my children's apartment I overheard old Mary saying to Annette, "brighten up, my child, for recollect it is new year's day, and if you cry now you will do so every day." Can it be believed these words so completely took possession of my imagination that I could not get rid of them, and I tried all I could to make my wife and children smile. So true is it that sorrow, though it no doubt ought to strengthen our faith, does also work upon our superstition. This is why we see amongst our peasantry and even amongst our more educated people so many omens and old customs kept up. After dinner the physician we had sent for arrived. Oh! how we hung upon his words, and with what delight and admiration did we regard him when he permitted us to hope; he remained all night, and Elizabeth sat up with him, he returned again the day after, and his measures were crowned with success. The expenses of sending backwards and forwards the remedies necessary, and the physician's fee, swallowed up all I had left, so that I was obliged to sell all my remaining plate; but I was grateful, contented, and happy. Whilst I was weighing the silver to send it to the jeweller I looked up and saw my wife weeping, and I thought she was still uneasy about Mina; but to my surprise she said "ah, now everything is gone! and what will people say about our extravagance?" "Everything!" said I, sharply, "have we not Mina left? Is it possible, after having feared we should lose her, that you can care about a few old spoons? I am surprised at you!" "Ah," said she, "but those spoons we have had so long." I really could not understand her, and I got up pettishly. This want of sympathy quite upset her, and I directly felt that, though she perhaps was weak, I was at any rate unkind. The fact is, men, from their earliest infancy, are so accustomed to have the ties of home broken—going early to school, being obliged to travel and shift for themselves—that they cannot enter into the delicate tissue of a woman's feeling for the accustomed necessities of her childhood, the old heir looms, and sacred pledges of the affection of former years, or those who are gone; her whole life long my poor wife had been accustomed to see these things, and to be reduced to sell them appeared to her the acutest of misfortunes. Had they been stolen it would have affected her less; and had it been possible and required that they should have been sold down as a remedy, she would have thought nothing of it;

but to sell them completely went against her. Yes, I was indeed hard upon her to speak as I had done—to seem to doubt her affection for her child, she who had watched over her night after night, and concealed her anxiety and grief with such courage that she always had a smile ready whenever Mina woke, that she might give her hopes of recovery, and yet for some time after this she could not take up the pewter spoons without an involuntary sigh. In vain did I remind her of Diogenes who broke his wooden vessel when he saw a child drinking out of the hollow of his hand, or Charles bring to her recollection the 10,000 Greeks in the retreat of Xenophon drinking through straws. "The force of habit," said Elizabeth; "why I should feel quite uncomfortable not to show my face, and an Oriental woman would be covered with blushes if she had to lay aside her veil." I wondered whether she had heard what I said to her mother. After dinner I said to Augusta that I hoped ere long to buy back the spoons again. She smiled, and said "I do not care about them now, dear, that you are so kind to me, for that makes amends for everything." Now that Mina was again well we had leisure to reflect on the extraordinary nature of her attack; we could form no sort of guess as to its cause. As she got stronger all her serenity returned, and even Elizabeth, who had suspected something of the truth, began to doubt whether she was not in error, and she dared not ask her any questions lest she should disturb her peace of mind; she therefore waited till she should become quite strong before she would make any attempt to find out. At last she thought the proper moment had arrived, and said, with a deep sigh, "Oh Mina, ever since St. Silvester's eve I have never had one moment's peace; I feel as if I had been guilty of perjury towards Wahlen, and ever shall do so. If I could but only think I should not marry Jalymann I should then at least be content." Mina turned her head away to hide the crimson which suffused her pale cheeks, and said, "but you do love Jalymann, I am sure you do, far better than you think." "I like him as a brother, Mina, because he is so excellent and worthy a young man; but, oh, how rejoiced should I be if that confidence which he has always testified towards you—" "What confidence?" said Mina, hastily, "he never showed me any except what had reference to you." "Ah, but," said Elizabeth, "if that should only lead to affection for you." This was the decisive moment to satisfy herself of the truth of her surmises, but instead of looking steadily at her to find out by her embarrassment and the palpitation of her heart whether she was right, Elizabeth, from natural delicacy, cast down her eyes and saw nothing. Mina quickly recovered her self-possession, and calmly replied "what is much more to the point, Elizabeth, is, that he loves you, and you will love him more and more." She looked fixedly at her sister whilst she said this, and was at once convinced that she was trying to penetrate her secret; she therefore

said gaily, "so, young lady, I see nothing but a Baron will suit you, and that you think a farmer quite good enough for me; no, no, it won't do; you know you have yourself often said that I am more fitted for the great world than you are, and who knows when you are married to Jalymann but what Wahlen may console himself with me." Elizabeth looked up and saw such a natural smile on her sister's face, that all her suspicions at once vanished. Jalymann himself had had some little notion of the truth, and had been most earnest in his enquiries after her, but he avoided coming to the house. I was often surprized at the mysterious and embarrassed manner of the young man, but when Mina recovered, his suspicions also vanished, especially when he saw her gaiety apparently restored, and the modest young man felt perfectly ashamed of the idea he had entertained. Notwithstanding, a visible constraint existed amongst us; Elizabeth, though friendly towards him, showed no advance whatever of affection; Mina constantly suffered from returns of indisposition, and we none of us could tell whether the event would come off or not, and what was worse than all, what Augusta had said about Elizabeth was only too true; for from the moment in which she had been induced finally to commit herself her mind preyed upon itself. She felt as if behaving equally ill to both her lovers, and her health and strength visibly decayed.

One day we were all seated together, and Jalymann amongst us, when Elizabeth was called out of the room, and ten minutes after she came back pale and trembling, and crying out in a tone of the greatest agitation, "he is come!" Mina seized hold of her hand. "Who?" we all exclaimed at once, and poor Jalymann turned white as death. "Wahlen!" said she, "and he desires to speak to me." "Who? what?" said I, "how does he dare? It is I who will go and speak to him." I was going, but Elizabeth caught hold of me and said "oh, my father, he is more true than I am. Read this note." Poor Jalymann, in a state of dreadful emotion, took up his hat, and was going, but Charles stopped him, and said "you had better remain, had he not father?" "My presence," said he, in a low, melancholy tone, "must be unpleasant to Elizabeth, I entreat you to let me go." "No, no," said she, advancing towards him, and taking his hand, "stay: if you and my parents think me wrong I will not see him; I am now quite calm; I did not speak." But Jalymann persisted in his intention and said, "No, my presence will only be a restraint upon you." "No, no," again said Charles, "stay! if your being here were really any restraint upon us we should not be worthy of your friendship. Let us all be open, for without perfect frankness and confidence neither love nor friendship can subsist." I agreed with Charles, and joined in requesting Jalymann to remain. I then took Wahlen's note and commenced reading it. Mina got into a corner, and her demeanour struck me as most singular, for, though she

tried to assume an air of indifference, her colour came and went, and her breathing was loud and hurried. "Elizabeth, dear Elizabeth," said Charles, "tell us, I conjure you, what is the real state of the case? How comes it that Wahlen is here, and that he has written to you?" Elizabeth sighed profoundly, and said, "I do, indeed, deeply and truly love Wahlen." She then took a letter from her bosom, it was the one the reader has already heard, and which she had sent back, but not till she had first made a copy of it. "I sent him back this letter," said she, "as he had himself requested, and I did not put in one single word. I did hope he would have forgotten me; but just now a little boy from the village brought me that letter: read it aloud, papa." I read, "Dear—est Elizabeth, I am but twenty paces from you; I do not come 'to trouble your happiness, nor to reproach you; I wish but to 'see you for one moment, to receive my dismissal from your own 'lips, to hear you say 'I am happy,' to see your sweet smile once 'more; but if you will not grant this, send me back my note—' write only the word adieu, and that word, traced by your dear 'hand, will be a miserable consolation to him whose unhappy 'fate has robbed him of all he held dear.—Wahlen."

For some time after I had finished, the deep silence was only interrupted by the sobs of Mina and Elizabeth. Charles coughed two or three times as if to clear his voice for speaking. I turned round, and was just going to say, Elizabeth you ought not to see him, when I saw Jalymann, so I stopped and looked around me, but no one noticed my look, and I went on—"Elizabeth, you had better send back the note, and write the word 'Adieu.'" "I think," said Charles, "I think Monsieur de Wahlen deserves to have some explanation." "He deserves nothing," said I, "for he drew on your sister unknown to us into this foolish engagement." "Drew her on! oh, no, father: from what both my sisters say, he did not draw her on. I think Elizabeth ought to speak to him." "He is a man who is thoroughly up to all the wiles of art," said I, with harshness, "and Elizabeth is nothing but a poor simple country girl." "I think, father, from all we have seen of him, and the letters he has written to Elizabeth, he appears upright and honourable." "And you think his coming here shows it?" said I, ironically. "I do not pretend that he is an angel beyond the common weakness of humanity," said my son, with warmth: "father, I pretend to know nothing about love, but from what you have yourself told me, the conduct of Wahlen appears to me natural and beautiful: now, father, a good, amiable man, whose only fault is that he loves your daughter, deserves to be treated with courtesy, and I still think Elizabeth should see him." "But what can she say to him?" said I, more gently. "What always ought to be said, father, the truth." I felt that on the main Charles was right; but I knew what love was better than he did, and I dreaded the effect of this interview. "No," said I, "a personal interview is out of

the question. Either you or I must write him a kind and civil letter, telling him that Elizabeth is now engaged; if he is a man he will know how to bear it; if he has what you call the weakness of humanity, so have we also, and therefore, my good Elizabeth, you must not see him. It is better, is it not?" She silently bowed her head in acquiescence. "I will write, and Charles shall take the letter, and thus he will see that we treat him with kindness and consideration." I opened the door to go into my own study, and what was my annoyance to perceive him standing in the hall? Notwithstanding my anger, his countenance looked so pale and sad, his manner so timid, and his voice trembled so, that I was quite disarmed. I saluted him politely, but hesitated whether or not I should ask him to walk in, when Elizabeth suddenly perceiving him, made some steps towards him, but the impulse was involuntary, and she directly drew back and covered her face with her hands. Wahlen no sooner beheld her than he rushed past me and said "Oh, pardon me, good Pastor, I am sure you know all." "Yes, Monsieur Wahlen," said I, with dignity, "I do unfortunately know that you abused the hospitality you received under my humble roof to seduce the affections of a young and innocent child, and you have destroyed the repose and peace which we enjoyed in the midst of our poverty. Ah, sir, had you been just and upright you would have felt that that domestic happiness was the only happiness our humble position permitted us to enjoy, and in destroying our daughter's peace of mind you have troubled the peace of her whole family. We should none of us be at ease out of our proper station; indeed it would be a weight upon us which we could not bear. Oh, sir, we have only just had our family union and tranquillity restored; leave us, leave us in peace." When I first commenced speaking he cast down his eyes, but by degrees he looked up at me with a noble pride in his countenance, and said, "If, sir, as you say, Elizabeth is perfectly happy, I have deceived myself, and in that case I alone am to be pitied: I alone am wretched." "What, sir," said I, "were you cruel enough to wish to see us all miserable?" "Ah, Vicar," said he, much moved, "you little know me. I did hope I own that the heart of Elizabeth was not quite as tranquil as you would have me suppose; but I also hoped that I might be permitted the joy of restoring her to peace and happiness; it was my sole object in coming here. It is perfectly useless now to tell you the deep strength of my love for her"—here his voice failed, and tears filled his eyes—"to devote my whole life to her, to adore her for ever, that was all my wish or dream of happiness. My hopes are crushed, but as she once did love me I have a right to watch over her happiness, and the only desire of my heart is to see—but no, no, it is impossible—what am I saying?—I know not—and yet I would give my life a thousand times if I was sure that she is happy, and all I now suffer, were it a thousand times more than

it is, I would go through it again if I could be sure of her comfort." "And pray, sir," said I, "has it never entered into your mind that the very worst possible thing to ensure that comfort is your present uncalled for visit?" "For heaven's sake hear me," said he, interrupting me, "at first I wrote constantly to Elizabeth, I was then obliged to take a long journey, and feeling quite sure of her truth and devotion to me I resolved not to take any further steps without your permission, at least until circumstances should permit me to come forward and ask her from your hand, but when I reached home I found the last letter which I had written returned to me. I have some firmness, Vicar, but I am a man, and I deeply, deeply love. I was fully determined to sacrifice every thing, life itself, and felt I could even bless the hand of him who would make Elizabeth happy, although he was my rival; but I was determined to know how far I was sacrificed, and though I made up my mind that I would not see Elizabeth without she herself consented to it, I was equally determined that I would not suffer her to be disposed of against her will. I enquired at the inn, and there I learnt that just about the time she had forwarded my letter to me she had been exceedingly ill; I then made up my mind that I would see her, and if any unfair means had been taken to induce her to return that letter—if she still loves me—if her illness has"—"It was Mina," replied I, hastily, "who was taken suddenly ill, on new year's eve; and then Elizabeth returned you your letter; we knew nothing at all about it." Wahlen turned deadly pale, and said, with a choked voice, "If this is so, then indeed I ought not to have come." He looked enquiringly at Elizabeth, and slowly said, "Adieu! Elizabeth, adieu! May you be happy!" She raised her streaming eyes towards him—her features were convulsed—she tried to speak, but was unable—she lifted up her hand. He said, "Have you not a word, Elizabeth? not one adieu?" She raised her trembling hands to heaven, and said, with a painful effort, "Wahlen! adieu for ever! I am more wretched than you are. Forget me! forget me!" Her countenance expressed the anguish she felt. He ran towards her, fell at her feet, and seized her hand. I angrily called out to her, and tried to draw her away; but he steadfastly retained her, and said, "Only one word, Elizabeth—do you love me?" Her head sank down on her bosom, and, with a tone that made us all shudder, she pointed to Jalymann, and said, "I am promised, I am betrothed." Till that instant Jalymann had sat at the table, his head buried in his hands, apparently totally unconscious of what was passing, but Elizabeth's voice roused him; he stood up with violence, and seizing her hand, said, in a voice so low that it made a most extraordinary contrast with his actions, "Elizabeth, I implore you, tell me the truth—Do you love him?" "Yes!" said she, "I do—but"—Jalymann cast off her hand with energy; the dreadful paleness of his lips and face, the fear

ful stare of his eyes, the contraction of all his features, terrified us, and proved what a conflict his mind sustained, but it lasted only a few seconds; he heaved a deep-drawn sigh, gently took hold of Elizabeth's hand again, caught that of Wahlen, and placing them in each other, he precipitately rushed out of the room. This all took place so suddenly, and we were all so petrified, that not one of us could utter a word; but it was impossible to misunderstand Jalymann's meaning. My wife looked at me with embarrassment, but it was easy to see there was a sort of satisfaction in her countenance, for she had always felt most uncomfortable with regard to her daughter's engagement. "Well," said I to Charles, who was standing with his arms crossed, "I told you it was better for her not to see him." "But," said he, "I think it is much better she did, we now know the truth; and see how happy she looks!" "All our hopes are at an end," said I, passing by Mina. She threw herself on my neck, with the most delighted and happy countenance, and said, "Oh! no, no! dearest father." Elizabeth and Wahlen were still standing with their hands clasped, as Jalymann had placed them, and talking low to each other. I alone was miserable, for I saw nothing but a sad and gloomy future. Wahlen came up to me respectfully, took my hand and said, "Father!!!" "This is all very fine," said I, "but, my Lord Baron, what remains for me to say? In plain words I tell you, I will not give my consent to a marriage which you yourself will repent, and which can never be suitable to my daughter, and therefore must end in misery to her." "Misery to me!" said Elizabeth; "Oh, father! why will you not consent to make your daughter happy?" Saying this she fell on her knees before me, by the side of Wahlen; but I still held back, and said, "Impossible! impossible!" "Come, Charles," said Mina, with some return of her ancient vivacity, "let us all join hands together," and, in a half comic tone, she said, "Come, dear papa, come, say yes; make your poor daughter happy; and you will bring back peace and joy amongst us, which has so long been a stranger to us, so that we have hardly dared even to look at one another." I still hesitated, and, looking at my wife, said, "What do you say, Augusta?" "I say," said she, smiling, "that they love one another as no one can except those who are to be united for life." Charles looked earnestly at them, with deep and affectionate interest. I could no longer resist. "Stand up, dear children," said I, "we must see about it." They all got up and embraced me with a feeling of unusual content and joy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ENQUIRIES AND MARRIAGE.

We took our seats around the table, and I said, "Before entirely committing myself I must be satisfied upon certain points, which it is absolutely necessary I should know; for instance, my lord, are you of age? are you your own master? do you depend on your uncle merely because you expect to inherit his fortune?" Wahlen frankly told us his uncle would never consent to his marriage, and would disinherit him if he persevered in it. I laid before him as strongly as possible the folly and impropriety of acting against his uncle's wishes; but his only answer was, to take Elizabeth's hand, and ask me if I would give it for a million. "Not for all the treasures of the earth," said I. "Well, then," said he, smiling, "you refute your own arguments; you, with five other children, all equally dear to you, would not do so; and yet you expect me, who love her only, to give her up for the sake of a mere handful of gold. Father, you mock me." Elizabeth tenderly regarded him; but I resumed—"What means have you of your own?" "A small estate which brings me about 250 crowns a year, the only remnant of the brilliant fortune of which my father was robbed. I must also confess to you that on this little property resides an old and faithful servant of my father's, who faithfully stood by him in all his trials, and remained with him till his death. I have always left the proceeds of this estate in his hands, and lived upon what my uncle has allowed me, and a small sum of money which I fear is now reduced to a very low ebb; but, poor as I shall be, with Elizabeth I shall consider myself the richest and most fortunate man in the world." "But what plans or projects have you?" said I. He looked downcast and puzzled, and said, "I really hardly know how to answer you, my dear father, nor as yet do I know what I am fit for. My uncle is not only exceedingly proud, but excessively vindictive; and as he is very powerful I am quite sure he will put every obstacle in the way of my getting on, or procuring any situation which would be suitable to me; and my education has been such, that there are very few I am really fitted for." "Two hundred and fifty crowns," said I, with a grave look, "is a very small income." "But," said Mina, "you know you just said that Eliza was worth a million herself." "But you have not even the 250," said I. "There is your old servant. Oh, my lord, I ask you again, what are your plans?" "My plan," said he, "is to devote every energy of my heart and mind to Elizabeth. What you may wish me to undertake I know not; but, after all, 250 crowns is a very fair income for moderate wishes." "And may I ask you," said I, "what you have hitherto had to live upon?" "Three times as much," said he; "but then I spent it all on things I did not care about. And now, my dear father, may I ask you what is your

income?" "About as much as your own," replied I. "Well, then, you again refute your own arguments.—With the simple tastes and demands of Elizabeth"—"How do you pretend to know them?" said I. "Oh, I know well," said he, "what a person may live upon, for, till my fifteenth year, I lived with my poor father in a style which, compared with yours, would make your mode of living luxurious; but on his very, very moderate means we did contrive to exist very comfortably, that is, we made ourselves content with what we had. He only succeeded to the little estate I speak of a very short period before his death; then I considered myself a rich man, and I had quite sufficient for my utmost desires, till the death of my uncle's only son. No doubt I might now even, if I chose to go to law, gain back much of what my uncle unjustly robbed my father; but it would be painful to me to appear against my father's brother, I have another uncle, the brother of my mother, who is very rich, and who has no family of his own, but he is a queer man; and he hates me for no other reason in the world but because I am his sister's son. You see, then, I have some sort of expectations; but all I care about is the love of Elizabeth." "Yes," I said, "but love is a poor fortune—empty hands—a full heart." "Oh, but," said Mina, laughing, "true love always should be empty handed." I turned upon her angrily, and told her not to introduce her foolish jokes on so serious a subject. "Charles," said she, with a little of her old pertness, "I forget in which of your old books it is, that it says, in the Synods (is not that what you call your assemblies where every thing is decided?) the old wise-heads never came to a right conclusion because they were so grave, and set out with determining not to permit a smile. Well, my dear papa disapproves of my jokes, but all I can say is, if I had a lover I should feel glad if he was poorer than I, because then I would give him a proof of my love by working for him, and taking care of him always. Oh," said she, warming with her subject, "the rich soon cease to care about each other, because they have nothing to do for one another." "And the poor," said I sharply, "also cease to love one another, because the numberless cares and anxieties they have do not leave them time." "Ah, if they are totally and entirely destitute," said poor Elizabeth; "but, dearest father, we have been very, very poor, we have not ceased to love each other; on the contrary, our union was so much the more tender. Had you not yourself a hundred times more solicitude for our dear mother, to make her amends for her other privations? and for us still more sympathy and confidence? Our crust of dry bread was only the sweeter; and, indeed, I say with Mina, give me a loving heart, even if the hands are empty." "If I had a lover," said Charles, blushing up to his eyes—"you would be just the man for a lover," said Mina, laughing, "for the language of love is even more laconic than that of the Spartans, which you are so

fond of." It was the first time that Charles had ever pronounced the word lover. He replied, blushing deeper than ever, "I should delight in suffering hunger and thirst for her, and labouring for her with my hands, if necessary; to die for her even would, I think, be delightful; but to do what Jalymann has done to-day, that is what I call truly magnanimous." Elizabeth cast down her eyes, Mina looked gratified, and Wahlen for the first time recollected the young man who had placed Elizabeth's hand within his. Mina related the whole of his conduct from the first, and with so much animation that, quite overpowered, she was compelled to quit the room. My wife and I were neither of us quite satisfied with the explanation of Wahlen regarding his affairs. My wife's prudery was also something shocked at the open manner in which her daughter had confessed her affection for Wahlen. I remembered, too, how long she had been before she would even consent to hoist the white pocket handkerchief as a signal from the window. Though I partly agreed in her strictures, I rather laughed at her; but she told me my opinions on the subject were always tinged by my former acquaintance with Julia Goldman. "No, no, dearest Augusta," said I, "you wrong me there; for all I know about love is what I have learnt from yourself; it is, indeed, all that is most noble, most true, and grand in nature; it far exceeds friendship, it reposes the most entire confidence, and one must be virtuous and sincere to be able to enter into it, or understand it; it is the basis of every other virtue. Somehow or other I do not feel quite satisfied with Wahlen, and I wish he had not returned." "Oh," said she, "when I have only Mina and my little Annette to take care of, I will keep a much closer watch upon them."

Shortly after I returned into the sitting-room, and renewed my conversation with Wahlen, who told me his unjust and cruel uncle had entirely ruined his father, for the sake of enriching his only son. "I have," said he, "still in my possession papers which prove, without a doubt, his vileness; but I will not make use of them, because my poor father had always a strong repugnance to exposing so near a relation." I questioned him still farther, and found it would be indeed much against his uncle's interests to exasperate him whilst he had possession of these important documents. The capital he had left, too, was more considerable than he had led us to suppose. His little estate might be made of greater value if he lived on it himself, and he declared his intention of doing so. His old servant was very aged, adored his young master, for whom he was ready to do any thing, and would be only too rejoiced to live with him during his life. I therefore begged Wahlen to go and render his house fit for residence as soon as possible, and secretly told him I would fix his marriage for my wife's birth-day, which would be very soon. I will, said I, obtain a dispensation from the consistory, to pub-

lish the banns only once, and that on the morning of its celebration; but you must start to-morrow, and not come back till the evening before. The only person I invited to the wedding was my wife's brother, but he had a considerable order for his paper manufactory, and could not come. Wahlen communicated his intended marriage to his two uncles in so positive a tone, that any opposition on their part was hopeless. My wife's birth-day was on a Sunday. I tried to forget all about the matter when I preached, till my sermon being over, I published in a trembling voice, interrupted by my tears, the intended marriage of my child. Mina was the only one at church; I had made some excuse to prevent Elizabeth from going; when I reached home I found her quietly laying the table cloth. "You must have preached a short sermon, Papa," said she. Mina was standing at the window with an indifferent air, and a moment after my wife came in, and announced the arrival of Wahlen; she threw herself on my neck, and embraced her daughter, weeping and saying, "God bless thee, my child; may all thy days be as full of happiness, confidence, and love as mine have been; and your children, if you ever have any, resemble my dear ones." Mina, with a look of utter astonishment, said, "What is the matter?" I had had secretly prepared a coronet of flowers, which was in my study, and went to fetch it; I placed it on Elizabeth's head, and presenting her to her mother, said, "Here, dear Augusta, is the present I make you on your birth-day, your daughter's wedding crown and a new son." "Good heavens," said Mina, "now I understand all about it. You are then going to be married to-day." "Mina," said I, "I am astonished! what do you mean? you were at church, you heard me give out your sister's banns." She turned as red as crimson. "I recollect now," said she, "but I was so absorbed in thought I did not understand." Poor girl! The seat opposite to her's was where Jalymann usually sat, and he was absent. Wahlen just at this moment entered, and embracing Elizabeth, he looked at me and said, "Mine! mine for ever!" In a moment the joyful news spread through the house—the children came in laughing and crying, and embracing their sister and their new brother—and the delighted Elizabeth was surrounded by happiness and joy. Old Mary ran in to make her congratulations. "Ah! Miss Eliza," said she, "I remember the plot of peas, and I will go there and offer up my prayers." Elizabeth blushed, and Wahlen embraced old Mary. The whole scene was too much for me; the feelings of a father in marrying his child are solemn, humble, prayerful, mingled with anxiety, and rather a source of sadness. When he sees the first tears of the newborn infant, he thinks, perhaps, of those she will shed hereafter. But at her wedding the bridal crown reminds him of her death, and in the garland of roses he also thinks there may be thorns; therefore, in the midst of his joys, he weeps and he prays.

I quickly retired to my room, and there I already found my dear wife on her knees. I said nothing, but instantly knelt down beside her. Ah! little do children know the intense affection their parents have for them. No other sentiment can be compared with it. None sure can call forth the same feelings of grief and joy: the feelings of a lover or a husband have something of self interest in them; they expect love in return; but the love of a parent is more noble, more pure—its utmost wish is to see the beloved child happy. In the afternoon at three, I gave the nuptial benediction. None but those who, like myself, are permitted by their office to perform so solemn a duty for their child, can enter into my feelings on the occasion. After it was over Mina whispered to me that she thought she saw Jalymann amongst the spectators. "Poor man!" said I, sighing, and Mina re-echoed my sighs.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE STRANGER.

"May I be permitted?" said a strange voice at the door just as we had sat down to supper: the door flew open, and then entered a little old man, extremely thin, with a dried up complexion and marked features, an acquiline nose and merry eyes, which altogether gave his face a very droll expression. I rose from the table, and asked him his business. "I trust, my good pastor, you will pardon the liberty I take," said he, with an open, candid air, "but my coachman tells me it is impossible for my horses to proceed farther, for the roads are flooded, and therefore I must stop in your village, so, if you will permit a hearty, cheerful old fellow to join your company you will confer a great favour." He said this so rapidly, and moved about his body in such an extraordinary manner at the same time, that the children could hardly keep from laughing. I was excessively put out, for, excepting our good old school-master, whom I had invited because he was so fond of my Elizabeth, not another person was present, and, under the circumstances, a stranger was quite out of place, so that my wife, the children, and above all, Elizabeth, plainly manifested their wish that I should refuse his request; but before I had time to speak, he gaily said, "I see by your eyes that you all wish me a hundred miles off, and I must confess a stranger's appearance must be very inopportune; I know myself I should wish him at the Antipodes; but listen to me, I am the father of a large family, and at this very time am about to marry one of my daughters, when they told me at the inn that yours was married this morning, and I thought that my having a sort of sympathy in the happy event I should not be altogether unwelcome, for I

felt I should like to congratulate a good father and mother, and to see the young couple, and participate in the happiness and the joy of the occasion." It was impossible, after this, to refuse my hospitality, and his manner had so won round the children that all united in asking him to stay. We handed him a chair and a plate; he sat down, ate, drank, and talked, and made himself a very agreeable guest; in fact, he was so completely at his ease that he really was not the least restraint upon us.

As I had made a complete secret of my plans, there had been a great deal of bustle and confusion all the afternoon to prepare for supper, for no one, except old Mary, whom I was obliged to tell, that she might have some provisions ready, knew any thing about it, consequently we had very little time, any of us, for opening our hearts to each other. My wife, who was desirous to do all the honour she could to her daughter's wedding, made every body work, to get things ready, even the bride herself. After our repast was ended, Elizabeth came to me for my blessing; I laid my hand on her head, and said, "dear child, God grant you many days as happy as this." She then went round to her mother, her sisters, and her brothers, who all offered up their best wishes for her. The grey man (for so the children designated him, his whole attire being of that colour, and his complexion nearly of the same tinge) took her hand in his and said, "Young woman, may God give you patience and courage every day, with a moderate share of happy ones; and may you at least once a year be as happy as at this moment." "Oh, sir," cried Mina, "that is far too little; your wedding congratulations are very poor; particularly for my sweet sister, who is so meek that she receives joy as others would sorrow, with the ready tear in her eye." "And pray how does she support grief, then?" said the grey man, laughing. "Why, your character of your sister is far worse than my wish." "You do not understand her meaning," said I. "Elizabeth bears grief with patience, and joy with quiet resignation." "Then she is very foolish," replied he, "for she ought to bear sorrow with courage, and joy with gaiety." "Courage!" said Mina, sharply, "you little know the courage she is capable of; if I were to tell you"—Elizabeth stopped her speech with a kiss. I was rather annoyed at the stranger's appearing to doubt the strength of mind of my daughter, and taking him aside, I told him of the noble manner in which she had been willing to give up her own inclinations for me. He appeared much struck, and, in a manner which was very attractive, he went up to Elizabeth and kissed her hand, then, turning round to me, he said, "I know well what a loving, tender heart is capable of; and the moment I saw your daughter I felt sure of her amiability; but both you and your other little girl say that she bears happiness as others bear grief, with resignation; now I say such is not a natural expression, and therefore I again repeat that I wish

the young bride many happy days, and courage to receive them with gaiety, even though they may be preceded and followed by others of a more trying and mournful cast. We ought not only to enjoy our own happiness, but that of others; cheerfulness is gratitude towards God; too tender a heart often becomes morbid, rather pleased with melancholy, and incapable of entering into or rejoicing in the happiness of others; to be able to partake frankly of others' joys is a virtue which requires much more energy and effort than compassion."

The little grey man seemed fond of laying down the law, but all the while in a very gay, lively manner, more as if he was telling pleasant stories, and illustrated his notions by very pleasant anecdotes, which much caught the attention of the younger ones. As we knew he could not be very comfortable at the inn, I offered him a room, which he frankly accepted, and sent for his portmanteau. After all the rest had retired, except Mina, Charles, Augusta, and myself, our conversation assumed a more serious tone. "You appear," said he, in reply to something I had said, "to be a very happy man." I shook my head, and said, "With such a numerous family as I have, and such very small means, I have many cares and anxieties. I do not want much, but I certainly should be thankful to have a little one." "That is just what every one says," replied he; "rich and poor, all alike, wish for something beyond what they have." "According to your theory," said Mina, "every one ought to be happy, even the very poorest." "And why not? if they have health, liberty, and warm hearts? I could easily prove to you little ones that it is only envy and vanity which makes one discontented." "Envy and vanity!" said Mina, "say what you like—but what gives rise to envy and vanity? Is it not disappointment?" "Just tell me," replied he, "whether the envious man deserves all that he has?" "I say again," said Mina, "that, to be content with as little as we have, people ought to try if they can do as well with it as we do. I never was in the city but once, but that was enough to show me the difference." "I cannot understand how a wise man, who knows how very little is really needful, could wish to have more," said the stranger. "But," said Mina, "it is not everybody who would like to be confined entirely to their own family circle." "Why, it would be impossible for them to do so. Men must disperse, and live amongst others; but then they ought to endeavour to bear with one another, just as a good mother bears with her children; a hundred times a day they offend her, and a hundred times she forgives them, excuses their faults, and glories in their good qualities. It is not enough for us to act with justice—that is our absolute duty; but we must be indulgent, forbearing, and full of love for each other. I have lived long in the world, amongst all sorts of people, and I have almost always found I could do what I liked, and obtain all I wished, by knowing exactly

when to yield, even if I was conscious that I was in the right. Certainly I have a very happy disposition by nature, and that is a gift from the Almighty. I have often been deceived; I have met vain, ambitious, proud, deceitful, cross, negligent, ungrateful men. I let the proud boast, the ambitious take the highest place, do not contradict the obstinate, never answer the rude man, expect nothing from the ungrateful, avoid the deceiver, and try to think the world is made up of such people, and that we must bear with them. I avoid entering into it as much as possible; I look up for direction to Him who bears with them and with me, and endeavour to do all the good I can in the circle in which he has placed me."

Charles sat listening with a contracted brow, and at last said, "If every one thought as you do, what scope would there be for any great and noble actions?" "What would it signify, if men were really happy?" said the stranger. "That is the essential point; that is the end for which man was originally created before his fall." "Yes," said Charles, "but as man is at present, happiness is not within his grasp; he is designed for an active, stirring life; he cannot always remain mewed up in one place; he has something beyond the circle of his own immediate home and village to call forth his energies and duties; he is a citizen of the world, and must be ready to go wherever his duty calls him." "Well, young man," said the stranger, laughing, "but you will not deny that these active duties for the good of his fellow creatures cannot be more efficaciously performed than by performing the duties prescribed in his own immediate and family circle, where surely he ought to form around him an atmosphere of love and benevolence. He must first perform those duties which the Divine Being has placed within his reach, and then see whether he is called upon to serve the world in general. Show me any good result proceeding from plans formed by philanthropists for the general good of mankind. No, no, my good friend; fallen man may see and admire what is grand and good, but there is that within him which renders him unable to effect it. To be able to subject and sacrifice his own will in every thing is a task man is unable to accomplish. Take my word for it, we must begin at home by subduing our own will, and that not in our own strength. Show me any great and good undertaking which has been successful for the amelioration of the woes of man, and depend upon it you will see it has been effected by simple-minded, humble, self-denying men, who have laboured first of all in the narrow circles of domestic life, and, who having first prepared the way, others have risen up and carried out their designs." "But," said Charles, interrupting him, with a triumphant air, "the man who has been able to seize hold of and improve upon the plans of these simple-minded men for the general good, and carry their plans into practice, could never have done so had he remained

shut up in his domestic circle." "Well, but," returned the stranger, "where will you find the man who only desires the good of his fellow creatures, and devotes himself solely to that object, without any view of personal interest or ambition? You say, he has shown a noble anxiety for a most useful and virtuous end; I say, if he is ambitious, that he has been led on by a desire of distinguishing himself—if he proves successful he is a great man, if not, he is laughed at. Almost all great reformers are men who have no family of their own. The anxious wish of benevolent activity is the dream of a young warm-hearted mind, as yet uncurbed by disappointment. Alexander conceived the grandest and most noble project which perhaps ever entered into the mind of a conqueror, that of uniting the three parts of the world under Greek civilization; but what torrents of blood and fearful horrors took place in bringing about his magnificent design." "But," said I, "do we not often find that the Almighty himself works by fearful means?" "Without doubt," replied the stranger; "but can you for a moment dare to compare the eternal wisdom, foreknowledge, and love of God with the atom man, who makes but one step as it were from the cradle to the tomb. Whatsoever God designs leads surely and certainly to the end he proposes. But how can a man even guess how his projects may turn out? The plans of Alexander, in spite of all the bloodshed, were soon overthrown; and as far as his views went what good was accomplished? So when Columbus discovered a new world, peopled by savages, what a magnificent opportunity for Europe to have imparted to them the blessings of civilization and true Christianity; but, on the contrary, the barbarous Spaniards sacrificed thousands of their fellow creatures to their greedy thirst for gold, burying them for life in their mines, and making them suffer torments unheard of, for the gratification of their avarice and rapacity." "I trust," said my wife, sighing, "that the Spaniards did not really know all the cruelties that some amongst them were guilty of." "They knew it only too well. Las Casas spoke with horror of the cruelties they exercised towards a people whose virtues they perfectly well knew and acknowledged, but he alone was found to take their part. Years passed on, and their barbarity, so far from ceasing, only encreased, and threatened to destroy the inhabitants of that quarter of the globe, till the Almighty took compassion upon them, and, by an apparently slight circumstance, not under the controul of man, caused some horses to escape into the wild prairies, which the Americans, until then timid, because they had no means of escape, seized upon, and, from being the most easily conquered, now formed such powerful armies, that they became in their turn a terror to their tyrants." "Still," said I, "I would hope that the Spaniards may have sinned greatly from ignorance. In those dark ages true philanthropy and Christian philosophy

were but little known." "But in this age of light and knowledge," said the stranger, "what say you to the most polished nations—the English, the French—purchasing poor negroes, and making them suffer the greatest barbarity in their plantations? The only difference is, in Spain it was for the pure gold in the mines that human life was sacrificed. No, no, it is always the same. For gold! man sells his fellow man; and in the case of the negro it is by men professing to serve God, who pride themselves in their beneficence and humanity, who read, and who write, books on morality and justice, and yet heap cruelty unutterable on their brothers' heads. And what man is there noble enough to come forward to the aid of those poor, miserable sufferers? Again, I say, let each one, in his own sphere, endeavour to make those around him as happy as he can, fulfilling the duties of the station in which the Almighty has placed him, and he will at least have the satisfaction of alleviating a portion of the evils of suffering and fallen humanity, and fulfil the purpose for which he was sent into the world."

We were startled by the clock striking twelve, rose hastily, and went to bed. Charles said, "he is not much of a philosopher, but he seems a very good man." "I always thought," said Mina, "that true philosophy was intended to make people good."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE PEARL NECKLACE.

The next day we were all, more or less, occupied with the thoughts of Elizabeth's departure, and my poor wife was fretting herself because she was not able to make up any thing of a trousseau for her; Mina was looking out of the window, gazing thoughtfully in the direction of Jalymann's farm; and Charles occupied in a philosophical discussion with the stranger. "I wish," said my wife, "this man would go, and then we could talk over Elizabeth's trousseau." At last a messenger came from the inn, to say his carriage was ready; he bid us farewell, and said, "I shall soon come and see you again," and then he took out of his portmanteau a necklace, consisting of four large rows of pearls of an oblong shape, and presenting them to Mina, said, "Here, little one, this is to remind you of the stranger and his philosophy." He then shook hands with us and departed. "I wonder he did not make this present to Elizabeth," said Augusta, in a low voice; and I rather agreed with her. Soon after Wahlen and Elizabeth returned from a walk, I made them sit on each side of me, and Wahlen told me that his paternal uncle had written him such a letter that any idea of a reconciliation was impossible, and that his mother's brother had not even condescended

to reply to his communication. My wife sighed; and I, after repeating some part of the conversation that had taken place last night, added, "perhaps it is all the better, my son, for Elizabeth will now remain in her own sphere of life; you will be no richer than I am; but you may be very happy." He embraced his wife, and said, "There is my treasure." "Constancy of affection and entire devotion," said I, "or that solid attachment which takes the place of what is commonly called love, is much more rare amongst the rich than the poor. Nothing unites people so nearly together as being obliged to occupy themselves with the same cares and occupations. Now, in a large, magnificent house, how little are the husband and wife thrown together; in a small one they must constantly come in contact. You know how happy your mother and I are, after more than twenty years' marriage; but you cannot know all that this excellent wife has done for me; the cares, the labours, the watching she has gone through, to provide for all my wants. Our reciprocal sacrifices and anxieties have only augmented our deep attachment, which has proved the solace and joy of our lives. You will be poor, like us; and, like us, you will, I trust, be happy." Their countenances expressed their certainty of the result; and soon after they went with Charles and Mina into the garden. Notwithstanding all I could say, Augusta would distress herself at not being able to furnish the trousseau; at last I said to her, "My dear wife, did any of our possessions add to our happiness?" "After all my labour and work," said she, looking at her linen, which she had sorted in different heaps, "I cannot make six proper divisions, so as to leave any for ourselves." "What are you talking about?" said I, in an impatient tone. "I cannot let her leave the house empty-handed," said she. "Why, my dear," said I, with an attempt at cheerfulness, "what does a child bring with them when they come into the world?" "But they are received into the arms of maternal tenderness and love," said she. "And is not Elizabeth going to dwell with him who adores her, and who is adored by her? does she not bring to him the rich treasury of affection?" "Yes, but nothing more," said she, putting down a bundle of table cloths, sheets, and towels, "and that is all I can make out without robbing her brothers and sisters; and she may carry all that away in her apron." "My dear," said I, quite vexed, "if she had ten thousand times as much it would add nothing to her real merits; her modesty, industry, simplicity, and trust in God, the patience and courage with which she will help her husband to bear all difficulties, her faith and confidence, and good sense, the blessing of God and ours, and the good example she has always had at home, are imperishable riches, and a crown of gold could not purchase them, and yet you regret a mere parcel of rags." At the word rag she gave a deep-drawn sigh, took up one of the table cloths, and changed it for another. I was de-

lighted to see Mina come in, hoping she would help me to cheer her mother; but she also looked at the trousseau, and, sighing, said, "Is that all?" "Yes, my dear, it is, although she is the eldest." "And the best amongst us," said Mina. "But you are my children, too," said Augusta; "there is your portion, and there is Annette's; I will now put them aside for you." "Is this really and truly mine?" said Mina. "Yes, certainly, unless fresh misfortunes should oblige us to sell them." Mina took her packet, and, without saying a word, placed it on the top of Elizabeth's; she looked at her mother with a supplicating air, and embraced her. "My dear," said Augusta, much moved, "I cannot consent to it." "Oh, mother, you will not pain me by a refusal; I do not want it; I shall never marry; but even if I do, I shall not want it." She was so earnest in her entreaties that she gained her point; and her mother said, "you will marry some day, darling; but by that time we shall have more, or we will divide what is left." "Well, well," said I, "if we had millions to divide we could not be happier; we have dear, excellent children, and they are our best riches." "But we will not let Elizabeth know," we all said together; and Augusta looked quite pleased at the fine, large packet.

Some days afterwards the question was discussed whether or not we should call upon the Agent. He was the representative of the Lord of the Village, to whom it was my duty to communicate my daughter's marriage; but I had a great repugnance to any renewed intercourse with him, for, without ever having openly quarrelled, we never visited at his house; time had softened down all our angry feelings, and we always spoke whenever we met. "Perhaps," said my wife, "if we do not go, they will set it down to pride, because our daughter has married a nobleman." I cannot help thinking Augusta was rather gratified at the idea of seeing Madame Skinck in company with Madame La Baronness. We settled at last that it was the proper thing to do, and accordingly Augusta and I went to introduce the bride and bridegroom. Mina wanted her sister to put on her handsomest attire, but she, on the contrary, would make no difference in her dress. The manner of our reception was amusing enough; the Agent every moment addressing Elizabeth, though with rather an ironical air, as "Your Ladyship;" whilst his wife, on the contrary, in a very marked manner, always called her Madame de Wahlen. My old acquaintance, the housekeeper, made constant excuses for coming in and out of the room, and always fixed her eyes on me with an insolent stare, and her manner alone was enough to show the character of her employers. Elizabeth's conduct was perfectly self-possessed and modest, admiring in a natural manner the magnificence of the things pointed out to her notice, speaking without any embarrassment of her husband's present confined means, and the small country house they were

going to live in, and the simple, busy kind of life she expected to lead; the natural tone in which all this was said could not fail of impressing Madame Skinck, and forcing her to be more polite and cordial. Skinck himself was, as usual, haughty towards us, and cringing to Wahlen, who, to perfect politeness added great dignity of manner, and kept that just medium which high birth and a good education always maintains over purse-proud assumption; in short, our visit passed off far better than we had expected. A few days after came a note of invitation to dinner, for ourselves, the bride and bridegroom, Charles and Mina; and the servant mentioned to ours that the party was given to celebrate the return of Skinck's only daughter from school. Elizabeth persuaded Mina to make no attempt at dress, but she put on the pearl necklace which the stranger had given her, "not that I think it pretty," said she, "but he was a kind, good man, so I like to wear it." Madame Skinck presented her daughter to us, a pretty-looking girl, of about fifteen, and apparently very opposite to her mother in every way. She saluted us with a modest, graceful air, and conversed pleasantly with my daughters, when her mother was engaged. Such magnificent preparations had been made for the entertainment, that it seemed as if they wished to show us what riches could do. A large party were assembled from the different chateaux in the neighbourhood, and to every one of them Madame Skinck introduced Elizabeth as Madame de Wahlen, the daughter of our Pastor, and afterwards her own daughter, who was dressed with extreme elegance and taste. All the company stared at us: Mina began to look quite angry; Elizabeth very timid; Charles more timid and embarrassed than I had ever seen him; Augusta as silent as usual, and evidently uncomfortable; Wahlen as he always was, not appearing to imagine that any one could be thinking about us—but his noble, simple, and reserved manner rather kept a check upon the quizzers. Madame Skinck had not, perhaps, the intention of exposing us to ridicule, but she certainly thought to make her daughter shine, and to shine herself, by the contrast; and she imagined that our rustic appearance, and the want of fashion in my daughters, would set off to advantage her dress and Juliet's. At dinner I could not help feeling much for Charles, whose really good-looking figure was lost, by his sitting at least a yard from the table; he ate nothing, was quite ill at ease, and kept his eyes, usually so speaking and intelligent, fixed upon his plate. Mina had regained her equanimity till she suddenly perceived an old baroness, who was opposite to her, looking at her with much attention, and whispering to her next neighbour, who immediately fixed her eyes also upon her; Mina coloured a little, and then said drily, "You are looking at me, ladies, with great attention, be good enough to tell me if there is any thing extraordinary about me." "O, certainly not," said they; "we were only ad

miring your magnificent pearls." Mina, who thought them very ugly, had almost tears in her eyes, thinking it was said in irony, but she was mistaken. Madame Skinck added, "Indeed, I never saw any more beautiful or of finer water. Dear child, would you let me examine them?" Mina unfastened them, and handed them to her. "They are far finer than yours, Juliet," said she, with a tone of annoyance! "but perhaps yours are more equal in size. Bring down your necklace, that we may compare them." Julia did so, and every one said at once Mina's was far the best; and, besides, Juliet's had but two rows. She got up to fasten on Mina's necklace again, saying, in a graceful manner and lively tone, "I am really quite jealous yours are so very superior."

Madame Skinck, to hide her mortification, began to talk of the school at which her daughter had been educated, and the impossibility of learning any thing in a country village, and how awkward all young people were who were brought up at home. We felt this was intended for us. Juliet looked entreatingly at her mother, and then the Agent took up the conversation, and said, "Yes, Juliet's education, no doubt, has cost a mint of money; but I do not grudge it, for she plays and sings divinely, dances like a sylph, speaks French like a court lady, and English, too; don't you, Juliet?" The poor girl was on the tenter hooks; she strove in vain to change the conversation. Her father said, "Talk French to us, dear, and don't be a little fool; show us what you know." We felt for the poor child extremely, and really hardly knew which way to look. Wahlen, to relieve her embarrassment, addressed her in French, and she gratefully replied to him. When he saw that all the company were ignorant of the language, he told her not to annoy herself, but to look upon the scene as a mere farce. With tears in her eyes, she said, "I should not care so much if it was only myself that was made uncomfortable; I deserve it, for I know I ought at once to have obeyed papa, and spoken French; but it is so very unpleasant to speak in a language no one understands. I am so thankful to you for helping me to please my parents." Wahlen kissed her hand with an air of feeling. "Bravo! bravo!" said Skinck, who thought it was admiration of her talents. "Does she not talk like a Parisian? Oh, there's nothing like a good education." "Your daughter says that which would adorn any language," said Wahlen; and he continued to converse with her to prevent her feeling awkward at her father's ill-timed praise. It was really a touching sight, the contrast between the natural delicacy and good feeling of the poor child, her lovely and speaking countenance, and the vulgar boasting and ill-nature of her parents. "Now, then, you shall talk English," said Skinck; "and by-and-by you shall give us some music and singing, and then you shall dance." "Never mind," said Wahlen, "I will help you." With a sad smile she replied, "Can you also speak English?" "Not very well," said

he, "but I am in good hands for learning; for my wife and all her family know it perfectly." Then turning to Charles, he said, "It is now your turn; Mademoiselle will converse with you in English." Charles blushed as much as Juliet, and could hardly stammer out a word. Mina then took up the discourse, and told her how much we all felt for her, and Juliet expressed her warm thanks and great delight to find she could converse with her in English. Elizabeth, who had all along encouraged her husband to help her, now joined in the conversation, and so did I also, saying all we could to comfort her. She tried to make excuses for her parents, in the most delicate manner possible, and so won upon us all, that Mina said we must be friends. We perceived that her parents thought we were prolonging the matter too far, so we stopped; but all of us, excepting Charles, had quite lost all shyness: he was totally unable to gain any confidence in himself, and, though by far the best English scholar amongst us, he had hardly spoken two words. Madame Skinck exclaimed, "Well, it is really wonderful to think your young people should have never left the village." She then went up to Mina, and familiarly patting her cheek, said, "Why, little one, with such a magnificent pearl necklace, and such accomplishments, what a sensation you would make in the world: it is really quite a pity your brother-in-law has lost all his fortune, or he could have introduced you." Juliet cordially embraced her, begged her often to come and see her, and told her mother (which was true) that she would learn much by conversing with her, for that our pronunciation was very superior to hers. "Perhaps," said Madame Skinck, "Miss Mina will have the kindness to come and converse with you sometimes whilst you remain at home."

In the evening after our return, though Mina spoke but little, and seemed absorbed in thought, she constantly smiled to herself, and seemed to have some pleasant thoughts which we were quite ignorant of. Three days after, when my wife and I were sitting together, she suddenly opened the door, and with strong emotion depicted in her countenance, a tear in her eye, and a smile on her face, she said, placing two parcels in her mother's hands, "Here, dear mother, are two dozen silver spoons; and here, dear father, are more gold ducats than I shall ever use in my life. Take them for Elizabeth's trousseau, and to send Charles to the university; and here," said she, taking up a row of her pearl necklace, "is a nest egg, to lay by till we want it." "Good heavens!" said Augusta, "you do not mean that you have sold the other three rows, or that it is possible you can have got all this for them?" "Why, it is certainly more than I expected," said Mina, laughing: "it was so fortunate I put on my necklace that day, at Mr. Skinck's; but from the moment I discovered the value of it, each pearl seemed a dead weight upon me. I wrote to Madame Seltzberg and begged her to sell three rows for me,

and that fourth, dearest mother, is yours. Perhaps some day or other it will come in to help the trousseau of another of your children," and she tried to tie it round her mother's arm. "Oh, mother!" said she, as Augusta still opposed her, "when I saw those pearls in your dear eyes, I thought every moment an age till I could get rid of mine." "Ah! my child," said Augusta, "these I now shed are tears of joy." "Sweet and delicious ones—much more precious than the finest pearls," said I, "for they would adorn the crown of filial piety." We silently and quietly bid one another good night; it would have been an act of sacrilege to speak loud. But, oh! what may not be expressed in such a good night! We could almost imagine our guardian angels around us. My wife carried off her treasures; and what valued treasures were they! Next day Augusta completed the trousseau of Elizabeth; purchased new garments for all the children—Mina's exactly like the rest; and I thanked my wife for the delicacy of this conduct. All the young party showed their things with joyful exultation to Mina, and Augusta made her remark her new dress. I pressed them both to my heart, whilst their eyes showed the most lovely pearls, and I said, "Oh! what a happy party we are—we have nothing more to wish for."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE SEPARATION.

Elizabeth was the only one who knew nothing of what was going on. She and her husband were so taken up with their future plans, that she hardly even thought about her trousseau. Without in the least loving us less than she had ever done before, she was naturally occupied with the thoughts of inhabiting her own house, and all her ideas were turned to the little estate of her husband; the charm of living alone with him, being all in all to him, and already thinking more of the limes which shaded his court yard, than the beautiful chestnut trees which for nineteen years had been her greatest joy. Oh, the absolving power of youthful love! it seems to swallow up every other feeling, till maternal tenderness comes, and takes the place of it. Though our poor daughter in vain tried to hide these feelings from us, we could not but perceive them, and my wife felt a little aggrieved by them. I tried to think it all natural, and speak of it in that light; but I also, in spite of reason, was rather pained to see all her notions of happiness centred in one whom she had never proved, as she had done us, and that she was longing for the moment to separate herself from us. On the last evening of their stay, the little grey man, whom I shall henceforth speak of by his proper name, Triedelben, made his appearance. He had

already made himself so much one of the family, that we conversed before him without reserve. "Ah!" said Augusta, looking out of the window, "there they are, walking about together; and thinking, no doubt, that after to-morrow they will have nothing to interrupt their mutual happiness, little caring that we must part with our child." "Let us thank God," said I, "that it is so. If love had not this power—if a husband could not make up to his wife for the loss of parents, and brothers, and sisters—how could young people ever leave home? Families would then always remain together like a flock of sheep; all sorts of disorders would arise from it; the defects and vices of the family would be perpetuated, till society became altogether degenerated, and then, like a stagnant pool, would go on for ever in the same errors and prejudices as their ancestors." "Just like those persons who form themselves into sects and castes," said Triedelben, "they always remain in a crude, imperfect state, like the wild fruits of their forests. It is the mixture of individuals and nations which has civilised the world. The wise laws of nature prompt man to seek his happiness in distant and foreign ties; and thus we see the youth and the timid young virgin willing to quit the shelter of the paternal roof, though it may be for a being only a very short time before an utter stranger." "Yes," said Charles, in rather a pedantic manner, "and that accounts for the Greeks, who were mere adventurers and fugitives from Asia, Africa, and the North of Europe, being the most remarkable people who ever existed, or who perhaps ever will exist." "That is not altogether true," said Triedelben, "for if human nature naturally goes on improving by experience, so the arts, sciences, and poetry of that people, and their public and private virtues, would be diffused also; and we know that the poor remains of their nation do not deserve the name of Greeks. The civilized world may have derived a great deal from the ancient Greeks, but if one nation alone was to civilize the world why did the Almighty permit the ancient Romans, after having attained such a height of perfection in every way, to be overran by the barbarians of the north? No, Charles! people, like the young bride who quits her maternal roof to form new and happy ties, must also disperse themselves abroad and mix with others, and thus fulfil that destiny to which they are appointed." "That is why," said I, "our Elizabeth!"—"You may say what you please about the laws of nature," replied Augusta, "but all I know is, I felt a great deal in leaving my father's house." This was the very point I desired to bring her to. The day I brought her home to my vicarage was as fresh in my memory as if it had been yesterday. "Ah! do you forget," said I, "when we slipped out of the garden door, and stopping to look back from the arbour of honeysuckles, how you said, smiling, though the tears were in your eyes, 'Adieu, dear father and mother! adieu, dear garden, where I passed my happy infancy!'"

and when I asked you if you would not regret leaving those loved scenes, you pressed my arm, and said, 'I only hope that all the tears I may henceforth shed may be as sweet as these. What can I regret when I have my own Charles?' You may forget these words, Augusta, but they are too deeply engraved upon my heart for me to do so; and every day of your life you have only confirmed them: let us, then, make allowances for our child, and rejoice in her happiness."

The very next day, Charles, Mina, and I, accompanied our dear child to her new home. She wept much in bidding adieu to her mother, and brothers, and sisters; but she soon recovered her serenity, and walked gaily, leaning on her husband's arm. We followed behind. Wahlen's little property was about twelve leagues from our village; Elizabeth's trousseau had been sent on by the waggon; we felt that we could not afford a carriage; and Triedelben, hearing that we intended to go on foot, offered to bear us company. It was a fine morning in June; Charles and Wahlen each carried a bundle of small linen, and Triedelben also had his knapsack. The merry adieux of the little ones and blessings of my wife accompanied us, and our first pause was at Hazel-rode. "Here," said I, pointing out the garden gate, "did I, twenty years ago, pass out with my wife to conduct her to my home, as you are now taking home your dear wife." Triedelben proposed that we should take our breakfast there; we sat down on the grass, and spread out our fare. The sight of the honeysuckle arbour vividly recalled the days of my youth. I looked at Elizabeth, and thought of her mother, and the rapid steps of time struck me with painful reality. I related to my children the history of my youth, and of my courtship, warmed with my subject, and a good glass of wine which Triedelben had brought. Charles then began to talk of the happiness of love, till I thought it necessary to check him by asking him how he could so vividly describe a passion which he had never experienced. "How can you expect I should always remain ignorant of that which you are always depecting as the most supreme happiness? Love, as I imagine it, is that intimate union of soul with the object beloved, that they cease to be two, and mingle into one essence. Love, I believe, approximates man to the Deity. How, then, can I speak of it coldly? The more I think of it—and I have never ceased to do so since Wahlen returned to my sister—the more I read about it"—"Oh! those detestable romances," said I. "And pray what made you read them?" "I never did, father, however much I might have wished it, after hearing Mina speak of the ten different sorts of love. You know my mother seized upon all those books; and you know, too, that I promised you I would not read them; but I have read in Xenophon the history of Abradates and his wife, and I could plainly see that he was a hundred times happier than Cyrus, because he had a wife who loved him so that she was

willing to die for him." "I wish," said I, with a very serious air, "you would give your attention to more profitable portions of history." "Surely," said he, "such an interesting picture of fidelity and affection cannot do me any harm; and how many passages are there in Plutarch"—"I declare," said I, warmly, "I am tempted to wish I had never taught my children to read, when even the valuable ancients put such ideas into their heads." "Oh, father!" said Mina, "it is not in this spot where you should hold such language, close by the very arbour where you yourself enjoyed so much the happiness of being beloved. You say love is a dangerous passion, but it never can be so for children brought up as yours are. Love may cause us grief, but it never can render us despicable." "No, no," said Charles, "the lightning may strike and consume the very best of men; and love, like the lightning, may come with irresistible force into the most virtuous mind, but it will not produce a baneful influence; it will only still further draw out those energies and powers which will purify and strengthen us for noble efforts. What would become of us without some beloved object on which to place our affections? For my part I feel sure I shall some day meet with one; and though it might be my unhappy fate never to be able to call her mine, I am sure I could die for her; and there is no noble action which I do not feel but that I should be capable of for her."

Whilst we were all talking and discussing our subject with great warmth, the garden door blew open, and we beheld Juliet Skinck, who, the moment she saw us, flew off like a bird towards us, and rushing up to Mina told her she was paying a visit at the parsonage. I half fancied I had heard a step and saw a little foot beneath the door sill, once or twice during our discussion; but at all events we now got up to continue our route, and Juliet accompanied us to the edge of the wood, till we came to the high road, when she took her leave of us. We arrived towards evening at the little town where we were to sleep. The inn keeper seeing us on foot gave himself very little trouble about us, and said he did not think he had rooms enough to accommodate us. Wahlen, forgetful of the mode in which he was travelling, spoke both sharply and haughtily to him. Triedelben remonstrated with him, and began a long prosy argument upon the respect due to our inferiors, rebuked the young baron's pride, and asked him on what he founded his superiority. "Is it," said he, "that you are better dressed, better fed, or that you have a more cultivated mind and a more refined language? These things are only the mere accidents of fate and education. Is not that man your superior who, for the sake of maintaining his wife and children, exposes himself to this humiliation, of being thus reproved by you? or the poor labourer who, in the sweat of his brow, rain or sunshine, tills the fields for the harvest? and has he not a right to be regarded as a brother? I know that a distinction of ranks

necessary, but those who are in a superior station ought not to add to the misfortunes of others by treating them with contempt." "That is all very well," said Wahlen, "but you deceive yourself as to my motive: it is not pride which induced me to behave with what you are pleased to call contempt; but when I see rudeness, avarice, mistrust, and impertinence, I consider them defects of character; and I think you will find that when persons in an inferior situation are treated with little consideration, it is on account of the aversion we naturally feel for their vices." "I do not agree with you," said Triedelben; "for in the world respect and politeness are awarded to vices much more dangerous than those of the lower classes, and much more despicable. Another time, when you meet with idleness, vice, or libertinism, in a rich or noble person, you will, I suppose, reprove it as you did this inn-keeper." "But," said Mina, "this class of people are used to it, and they do not feel it as acutely as we should." "Young lady!" said Triedelben, sadly, "don't you give yourself the habit of saying, 'they are used to it;' nothing renders the heart so hard; thousands of our fellow creatures are compelled to labour and suffer for the convenience of others—I will not say more worthy or better than they are—and I repeat it, it is their duty to try and make them amends by every means in their power for the unequal distribution of fortune." Mina was silent; Wahlen walked up and down the room, divided between conviction and anger. I hardly knew whether to be most surprised at the tone which the stranger adopted towards us, or the ascendancy which he had gained over us. Wahlen, with a great deal of kindness and amiability, had a good deal of the reserve and hauteur of the old German nobility; and when Triedelben spoke to him with a sort of authority which we only suffer in a parent or superior, he bit his lips, frowned, and seemed on the point of breaking out at him; but either the perfect coolness of the stranger or the force of his reasoning calmed him by degrees; and when the inn-keeper again came in, he spoke to him with gentleness and consideration; and soon after the man arranged some very comfortable apartments for us.

Next day early we reached Wahlen's house. Elizabeth was charmed with the exterior, which presented an appearance of neatness, even of elegance. "Oh! how pretty," said she, with joy and satisfaction. "It is much beyond what I expected." I also was highly delighted with the site of the house, a beautiful court yard, and a very fine lime tree in the centre of it. Mina and Charles partook of our pleasure. The countenance of Triedelben alone expressed dissatisfaction. The old servant, who evidently had the deepest reverence and affection for his master, came forward with a hundred bows: he wished to kiss the dress of his young mistress, but she held out her hand to him, and he respectfully carried it to his lips, every moment repeating Mon-

sieur la Baron or Madame la Baronne. His dress showed the marks of former grandeur: silk stockings grown rather yellow, a good cloth coat of rather a faded colour, and gilt buttons a good deal tarnished. I looked at Triedelben, and, knowing his democratic principles, I rather feared that the appearance and profound respect of the old man would call forth some of his saturnine observations, but, on the contrary, he shook hands with him with great cordiality, and afterwards with Wahlen, whose manner to his servant was most affectionate. He named us all to him: that, said he, is my father, my sister, my brother, and our friend. He then led Elizabeth into a room on the ground floor, which had been prepared for her; it had been very tastefully papered and elegantly furnished. Elizabeth could not speak, but she embraced her husband, and Mina sat down on the sofa, crying out, "Oh! how lovely! how beautiful!" Charles already began turning over the books, which were beautifully bound, and in a very pretty case. I was feeling most perfectly happy with my dear child's home, but seeing the frowning brow of Triedelben I had not courage to speak. "You may look as grave as you please," said Mina, "I think every thing delightful." "And so your sister seems to think," replied he, in a very grave tone, "and that is quite right; but I begin to think the Jewish Rabins were right when they said that the devil did not tempt Eve in the form of a serpent, but of a handsome young man mounted on a very magnificent serpent. Had he come in a simple form he could not have seduced her." "Perhaps so," said Mina, "for neither a serpent nor a demon are very attractive objects." "We ought not to allow ourselves to be seduced, child, by any demon, under whatever form it may present itself." "I see no demon here, except my kind brother-in-law. An exceedingly pretty paper, and a most comfortable sofa." I then related to them the delight with which I had ornamented my Augusta's room, and how I had laid by all my little savings for it; "and on such an occasion," said I, "that delightful moment in which one installs one's wife in her new home, as the queen to reign there, one may well, for once in one's life, break through the strict rules of economy." "That is not what I was thinking about," said Triedelben, "but you will find it out by-and-by." All this passed after Elizabeth and her husband had gone into the garden. Triedelben then proposed that we should go and see the rest of the house. As we ascended the stairs, and in every apartment, the wind blew through one; in fact, the only habitable room was the one down stairs. "It is rather the temple of the winds," said I, trying to hide by a joke the annoyance I felt. "Ah! now you see what I mean. A handsome young fellow, a little outward show; but the devil and the serpent beneath." I pretended to misunderstand what he was driving at, and said, "Yes, no doubt the house is rather dilapidated, for a grand servant in silk stockings." "Poo-

old man," said he, "he has just put on his holiday dress, which most probably was given him by his old master, that he might do proper honour to his young mistress; do not make game of him; but"—"But what?" said I. "You told me," he replied, "that young Wahlen was poor, but he seems to me to have too much of the feelings of his birth and station about him not to make me fear that he may some day regret the sacrifices he has made in marrying. He talks too much about them." "What would you have me do?" said I. "Why, now he is your son-in-law, I would have you talk reason to him, and advise him to seek for happiness by accommodating himself to his circumstances, and not be looking forwards to an uncertain future. He is richer than you are, and you contrived to be happy. To judge of the fertility of the province, he may, by a little industry, greatly improve his estate; that is if he really means to be a farmer, and forget his useless title of baron. Get him to-morrow to walk over his fields with us; I understand something of agriculture." I confess I was put out with this gentleman, who wished to direct us all; but then I thought of his very handsome present to Mina, and though I cannot say it was altogether gratitude, yet I certainly did feel we owed him obligations, for the necklace had undoubtedly assisted to relieve us from much embarrassment; and when I had told him the use Mina had made of it, he was both pleased and affected by it; but then, I was put out by his lording it over us, and, as I thought, taking advantage of the benefits he had done us, I therefore said several sharp things in reply, and he keenly felt them. "According to my own principles," said he, "I ought not to answer you; but, my dear Pastor, I have really a sincere regard and interest both for you and your family, such as I never before experienced, and I think I have shown it to you." "No doubt," said I, "your beautiful present to Mina"—he darted a look of fire at me, and I stopped. "No, no, dear friend, I was not thinking of that," said he, after a moment, "not those trumpery pearls, but of your children; and I forgive even Wahlen for his impatience, because he is to me as your son." He squeezed my hand, looked round, and said, "Good heavens! how the wind blows; and I am sure the rain must pour in in winter. Oh! I fear Elizabeth will have cause to shed tears herself, and that her sighs will echo the hollow sounds without. I cannot bear to think of her discomfort, sweet, gentle girl, in this cold house. I wish the happiness of all mankind, and I love her as if she were my own child." I could not feel very angry at hearing him speak thus of my own daughter, and I promised I would attend to his advice. The rest of the party soon joined us, and I saw Wahlen colour up when he observed Triedelben's eyes turned towards the holes in the windows and doors, and trying to patch them up. Minette helped him, laughing and joking all the while; he began with joking her, and then rather

made some excuses. "O, yes," said Triedelben, "of course you never lived here yourself; you gave your orders doubtless without seeing the place, or you would have spared a little of the furniture down stairs, and rendered the rest of the house more habitable." Wahlen was immensely annoyed, and his wife, by her caresses, tried to set him right.

Next morning we went through the fields, and Triedelben, with his tablets in his hand, made notes. After finishing our rounds, he turned to Wahlen, and said, in a satisfied manner, "Well, my friend, I congratulate you; you may soon become a rich agriculturist; your farms are excellent, but neglected; they ought to bring you in, one year with another, 700 crowns—that is, if you lay yourself down to work." Wahlen's face brightened up at this; he walked close up to Triedelben, talking to him about English agriculture and his plans of improvement; he grew animated, and gave an enchanting picture of the happiness which he and Elizabeth should enjoy in their little farm; calculating at once upon his 700 crowns, and talked of getting a little carriage to come backwards and forwards to us, and to send for us from time to time. An incredulous smile, as to the economy of Wahlen, passed over Triedelben's countenance, and he said, "It is pleasant to see people like you always hopeful; and as soon as one project is destroyed, forming another: but still there is some danger to those who have this buoyant spirit, for whilst they are building their castles in the air they are too apt to neglect the passing moment, and permit those dwellings they possess to decay. Instead of sowing in the spring they want to gather in the harvest; and you, my dear young friend, want to harness your carriage while you ought to think of holding your plough." Wahlen smiled good humouredly, and said he should grow wiser; but a moment or two afterwards he began to talk to Elizabeth of laying out a beautiful garden for her. "I advise you," said Triedelben, "to prepare your ground first with potatoes and cabbages." Before I left I took an opportunity of speaking to my daughter, and advising her gently to represent to her husband that life was too short to be spent in forming plans of happiness instead of setting to work in earnest to improve what was really before us. The dear girl was rather annoyed that we were not as pleased as she was with every thing belonging to her dear Wahlen; and Mina said she was quite right to look at every thing *couleur de rose*. Elizabeth pressed her sister to remain with her, but Triedelben, employing the influence he had acquired over us all, urged me strongly not to permit it. "No, no," said he, "let them be alone together for at least a twelvemonth, and know one another thoroughly, and not merely as love has painted them." He said to Mina, "it would not be fair to leave your parents without either of you."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DISPAIR.

We stopped at the same inn on our return that we had slept at in going. The host greeted us in a friendly manner, and expressed his regret at not being able to give us any sleeping rooms, as they were all engaged in consequence of a great fair. It was rather a disappointment to us, as we had counted upon a good night's rest after our fatigue. We had nothing but the common room to sit in, and, after some time, we walked out into the meadow where the booths of the fair were held. All sorts of games were going on and dances; the whole neighbourhood were assembled within three leagues round; all dressed most expensively; Mina, in her travelling dress, which was very simple; several smart and young persons passed by and cast disdainful glances at her. She was put out by it, and wished to return; but Triedelben said, "why do you wish to go, child?" She blushed and said laughing, "why it is the contrast of all this finery and elegance with my soiled, tumbled, and short gown, and my hat without feathers. But what vexes me most of all is my folly in minding it." "Poor child," said he, "let us see if we can remedy it." He then took her hand and led her through the crowd into the shop of a haberdasher, and wished to give her some ribbons and a new hat, but the only thing she would take was a black feather; he assisted her in putting it in her hat, for which she thanked him in English, and requested him also to make use of the same language. This had a marvellous effect, and attracted infinitely more respect than the finest garments would have done. It was soon buzzed about that she was an English lady, and she was followed, admired, played her part to perfection, and paraded up and down, the admired of all beholders. "A good lesson," said Triedelben, "of the value of popular favour." "Oh, just the feeling of a little country village," said Charles. "My good friend," said Triedelben, "mankind are pretty much alike everywhere. I blush to think of the trifling things which have often caused me success in life. In one place, with a valuable ring on my finger; in another, with a letter from an ambassador; sometimes with a well-filled purse, which I contrived to open; or a word dropped about Versailles or the Escorial; and yet not one of these things would prove either that I was a gentleman, or to be trusted." We sat down under the shade of some willows, and (to please Mina) continued conversing in English. Whilst we rested Triedelben took a walk round; and, on returning to us, he said he had been into a booth, where they were playing Pharo. He gave us a glowing description of the scene, and the varying countenances of those who were engaged in the game, so that we had a curiosity to the scene. We entered a low, dark tent, but hardly got in

before Mina, pale and trembling, took my hand, and, in an agitated voice, said, "Oh, my father, it is him; speak to him, I implore you; and get him out of this horrible den." "Who?" said I, quite frightened at her emotion. "See," said she, pointing to the most determined gambler, and then I saw Jalymann; his countenance pale and haggard, his glaring eyes watching very hard, and evidently losing immensely. A man who was standing behind said, in a low voice, "you are unfortunate; do not play any more." "I will, I will!" replied he, passionately, "I care not." And he laid down a fresh handful of gold. "Oh, speak to him, speak to him!" said Mina. "When the game is over," said I, "I will." "No, now, now!" said she, and going close up to him, she touched his shoulder, and said, "dear Jalymann." He turned angrily; but recognized her directly, and said, with affected tranquillity, "What, Miss Mina, is it you?" "I entreat you," said she, "let me speak a few words to you." He put down his cards, and stepped out of the tent with her. I followed behind, but lost sight of them amongst the trees. In a few moments Mina returned alone, and took my hand with a degree of agitation that terrified me. "I believe, I hope," said she, "that I have saved him. Don't blame me, father; think how he deserves our pity. He was in despair; it was to drown his grief that he took to gaming and drink. Poor young man his sense is nearly gone. Oh, poor fellow, he cannot forget; the burning tears fell down upon my hand. Oh, my dear father, I hardly know what I have done. Oh, my heart breaks to see him. 'My life is a burden to me,' he said, pressing his hand to his heart; 'what is there in love or virtue?—mere chimeras.' Oh, father, is it possible despair can so have changed him, that he looks on virtue and love as false?" "Calm yourself, dear child," said I, for she was speaking quite loud, and I feared least she should be overheard. I drew her away; I had never seen her so agitated. "I have no doubt, dear child, but that you have succeeded in persuading him; he is naturally good, amiable and well-disposed; he is saved, I am sure, and it is by you." "Do you really think so?" said she, with transport, and she joined her hands together. "I care not now, even though he does know how miserable and wretched I am." "My child, what do you say? what do you mean? It was then true what Elizabeth suspected?"—and which her agonized looks betrayed to us,—"you love him." She looked stedfastly at me as if to read my very soul, and said, "Father, I did not say so." "Dearest child, I read your heart." "Oh," said she, thoroughly humbled, first of all hiding her head on my shoulder, and then starting back and hiding her face, "then you will despise me, and if he has seen it he also will despise me." These words and her manner altogether quite overpowered me. I had intended to say to her how indelicate it was for a young woman to give her heart unasked and unsought; but it was utterly impossible for me to frame anything bordering on

reproach to my suffering child, and I said, with the deepest tenderness, "Mina, from the bottom of my heart I feel for you: and though no doubt you do blush at the sentiments you have entertained, you may also be proud of the courage with which you have hidden them from every eye." "Oh," said she, "what can he think of me if he has perceived it? but if I have saved him. I cannot repent of it though it may disturb all the serenity of my life, but what can he think? Come, father, let us get away as quick as possible for fear we should again see him."

We just then caught sight of Jalymann in the distance, walking alone with his arms crossed, in deep thought with himself. Mina seized my arm, and we moved off as quickly as possible behind the booths to the inn. The sitting room was empty, and she sat down in a corner; but in a few moments she came close to me, and said, "dear father, dear father, I entreat you not to say a word to my mother; let me at least be able to look at her without a blush: it is the only favour I ask of you; he, I am sure, will be silent out of compassion to the wretched girl who only betrayed her secret from seeing the despair he was in." "I am convinced, my child, that Jalymann is too honourable, and that he has a sincere friendship for you." "Oh," said she, "I shall never be able to look him in the face again; and you, Oh, my father, I am ashamed to see you; but no, no, I will not say that to you, kind, indulgent father, for you know the Almighty gave me this tender disposition and loving heart." "No, my child, say not so. A tender, affectionate heart you have, no doubt, but the feelings it has betrayed you into proceed from a want of proper restraint over yourself. Never let us make an excuse for our faults by saying we cannot help it; but watch over our weaknesses, and when we feel our own, be more pitiful to the failings of others." She kissed my hand. "Never shall you hear another sigh on that subject from me. If I cannot altogether recover my former serenity, at least I will act always with principle, and endeavour to grow in grace." My eyes filled with tears. "God bless thee, my child, and he will do so." I then got her to give me all the details of the rise and progress of her feelings for Jalymann, which she honestly, though with great pain, communicated to me: and I felt as if I were harsh in requiring it, as it was so humbling to her delicacy. She told me all that her agitation had permitted her to recollect of her interview with him; the promises he had given her to abstain from drinking and play, but deeply felt the mortification of having betrayed her sentiments towards him.

When her mind was a little restored to composure we rejoined Charles and Triedelben. And after what had occurred I determined on pursuing our journey at once, but the landlord said he had a very small apartment, in which he could put a little fresh straw, and Mina gratefully availed herself of the offer; we accordingly took possession of it; Mina lying down in one corner, and Charles

in another. When I thought them asleep I joined Triedelben ; but there was such a noise from the drinkers, that at last we retired into the little room, and seated ourselves on a bench, when I had the satisfaction of beholding my child in a gentle slumber, and Triedelben, looking at her with an air of satisfaction, said, in a low voice, "How sweet the sleep of innocence! There is some French author who says, 'It is in the countenance of the sleeper that you may make the most just observation of character. Princes and ministers should be made to sleep with their chambers open.' The first time I read this I remember I was very young and thoughtless, and I got into a number of scrapes by going with a dark lantern to make my philosophic observations on sleeping men. Generally I found that most men have in their sleep an expression of simplicity and good faith, which they have not when awake, unless their sleep is disturbed, which is almost always the effect of something wrong, either physically or morally. I have often thought it would have a good effect to see one's enemy asleep; it would create a kindly feeling to behold his features free from envy, hatred, and contempt. A man, not decidedly vicious, recovers in his sleep the expression of innocence and simplicity of his early years. See how your Mina smiles. May she ever preserve the calm happiness which she now enjoys." "May heaven restore her that calm happiness," said I. "He looked at me astonished, and I determined, as I had unwittingly said so much, to impart to him all that had occurred, feeling so thoroughly convinced of his discretion and the deep interest he took in us all. "Does she indeed entertain such deep feelings?" said he, "and yet has she been able to preserve such constant gaiety and self-possession?" "I account for it," said I, "by the satisfaction she felt when his marriage with her sister was broken off, and she knew that he would not, at least for some considerable time, come again to our house, and there is no saying what expectation she might, not unknown to herself, have entertained for the future." "What a blessing hope is," replied he; "the feeling of grief is never constant; the quiet moments, even of the most unhappy, far exceed the number of those in which despair seems to overwhelm them. Hope makes each day pass over; employment, the cares of life, occasional joys, and often the sweet visions of the night, with quiet rest, drive back the black cloud, and, by degrees, succeed in dispersing it." "Yes," said I; "but this is not the case with the luxurious and the self-indulgent; and it would not do to tell them so." "Why not?" said he, "why should we not try and show them that nature, or the God of nature, is much more beneficent than they are, or than they are capable of imagining; and that often those whom they think most unhappy enjoy most of satisfaction, to which they are quite strangers. Look again at the sweet, serene expression of your Mina. Dear amiable, excellent girl," said he; "how is it possible

that you should not be fully appreciated? She is quite right, she must not see Jalymann again, at least, for some time; but either he will some day seek her or else she will be quite cured of her temporary passion. You are a happy father, and much blessed in your children, and they will be happy also." Soon after we fell asleep on our bench, and did not wake until the sun was already high in the horizon. When Mina awoke I was delighted to observe that sleep, nature's best nurse, had quite restored the composure of her mind. We passed through the meadow and the wood without meeting any one, and though now and then at any sound she would quickly turn her head, no one followed us. She was perhaps rather more serious than usual on our journey, but on reaching home, the joy of the little ones, and the tender caresses of her mother, soon brought back her cheerfulness. All the afternoon was taken up in answering questions, and giving details of our visit and Elizabeth's house. We took care not to say a word about the dilapidated state of the house; but dwelt a good deal on the pretty drawing room, the court yard, &c., &c.; so that we gave her the roses without the thorns. Still, after all our descriptions, she enquired what was the general appearance of the house. Mina, who comprehended what she meant, said, "Oh, just such a one as our agent's wife would like," and her poor mother smiled with joy and pleasure. We did not go into farther particulars, but permitted her to enjoy her innocent vanity. The following day she recommenced her questions, and Charles made a little sketch of the place. Then we were obliged to give an account of our journey, though nothing was said of the meeting with Jalymann, and by degrees all returned to their usual occupations. Triedelben took leave of us, but said he should soon come again, and our esteem and friendship for him augmented every day. It was curious that we knew nothing of him, but what he himself told us, and were even ignorant of his residence. Mina thought he must be very rich, which we all suspected; she also was sure that he had neither wife nor children, though he had asserted the contrary when he first made our acquaintance; in short, every thing but his kind heart was a mystery to us. It is true at times we thought him a little sardonic and satirical; but still we could not help looking upon him as a friend sent by Providence to replace our dear uncle Frederic, and, whenever anxiety for the future pressed upon me, I used to think of him and feel that I had a true support and sympathising friend; not that he had ever said that we might depend upon his assistance, but there was a something about him which made us feel sure and certain of it. On his return, after Mina sold his necklace, my wife communicated the fact to him. He looked exceedingly pleased, and took Mina warmly by the hand, but he did not say anything; and though he listened with pleasure afterwards to all the details which I gave him of what had led to her doing so, it drew no

further observations from him. After taking leave of the family, he said to me, "watch over Mina; but don't interfere, or make any more remarks to her upon what passed the other day; time will cure her, and circumstances will natuarly develop themselves."

The great anxiety we now had was what we should do with Charles. The money we had left, and Mina's pearls, would only suffice to keep him at the university for a year; but the letters which we received from Elizabeth also caused some little uneasiness. In every one of them there were some expressions which we did not quite like; and Mina did not show us her letters, though she kept up a constant correspondence with her. In fact, we found Triedelben was right; for though Wahlen was devotedly attached to his wife he had been used to care so little for expense that he was constantly wanting things far beyond his present means; and when his crops brought him in money, instead of keeping it to pay his bills, he directly purchased some article of dress for Elizabeth, or useless luxury which they might have done without. This obliged him to borrow for his current expenses; and when she remonstrated he would quiet her by talking of the encreasing worth of his farm, and the certainty that his uncle must relent. Mina at last got so alarmed that she told me, and read me some passages of her letters:—"It is a comfort, dear Mina, to be able to open my heart to you, and tell you all my anxieties. Wahlen's extreme affection and love towards me causes him to run into expenses which sadly embarrass us. I ought to be still more happy at all the proofs he gives me of his deep love; and, by the most strict and rigid economy, and a hundred little sacrifices, which are a real pleasure to me, I try to make up for the dear fellow's lavish expenditure, which always proceeds from a desire either to dress me better, or afford me some comfort which I do not want. But I cannot deprive him of pleasure by an ungracious refusal, and, therefore, when I get him fast asleep, I quietly get up and try to earn a little to make both ends meet. What noble conduct, dear Mina, do we often meet with in those who are but too often looked down upon as our inferiors; that good old valet, whose silk stockings you laughed at, denies himself almost everything, to appear a little smart, knowing that it gratifies his master. Oh, Mina, I am almost ready to cry sometimes when I hear Wahlen talk of his farm paying so well. I cannot bear to raise any doubts; and then he does so doat on me, and I on him, that we must be happy, and I will not fret to vex him, if only we can keep out of debt. We pay Peter so much a month, and Wahlen is always regretting the smallness of the sum, though it is quite as much as we can afford. The other day the good old creature brought me two months' wages, and begged me, in a tone of deep emotion, to keep it for him till he got old, as he should want it much

"more than than now. I said I would take care of it for him, when he, hesitating and blushing, said, 'Tis only a trifle, my lady. In a few years my lord will be better off. Meanwhile, will you use this?' His voice broke down; I wept also; his tenderness and delicacy really did me more good than the money, though it came at a moment when it was greatly needed. To refuse it would have been impossible, for it would have half broken his heart; and all the while he kept on calling me Madame la Baronne with such excessive etiquette that it would have been a positive relief to me to have embraced the good old man, for whom I felt as a father. When my feelings at last permitted me to speak, I said, 'good and faithful friend, I will use your money because you wish it, and because we both love your dear young lord.' He tries to make himself so useful, though he has not been used to work, for he was only valet to my husband's father. Ah, dearest Mina, you cannot think how often I contrast our real poverty with the show we keep up. Sometimes I try to make Wahlen see it, and talk of providing for the future, but he always reverts to his expectations from his uncle, and it is the only cloud which ever troubles my otherwise perfect happiness." We were all sadly distressed, and especially at the next passage, which Mina's tears would hardly allow her to read. "I think sometimes, with painful anxiety, about the dear little being so shortly to enter into this world of care; to welcome it will indeed be joy, were it not for my fears as to the future; however, the school of poverty is, after all, a good school, and, for sometime at least, it will be dependent only on me for the supply of its little wants."

My dear wife jumped up, and I thought she was going to her room to pray, but she ran to the press in which all our money was kept, and the children gave a joyful shout; but I gave a glance at Charles, which my wife instantly perceived, and again put by her purse, but took it once more and laid the money down in two portions, saying, with a deep sigh, "It is very, very little." "Why not take it all?" said Charles. "It has been laid by for your college expenses." "Never mind; Elizabeth wants it much more than I do." "It would not be fair," replied my wife sorrowfully, shaking her head. Charles walked up to his mother, and said, "Mother, you would not force me to leave you?" "You leave us, Charles! What do you mean?" "Why, how could I stay to be an impediment in the way of Elizabeth? If you will not send all the money to my sister, I certainly shall go and seek my fortune; for I have been long enough burdensome to you;" and he spoke with a tone of decision so unlike his usual manner, that my wife was terrified, and yielded. But how to send the money was the next point—as we wished to avoid Elizabeth's being aware that we had seen her letters. Augusta thought it might be a useful lesson to Wahlen to hear of Charles's

generous sacrifice. "No, no," said Mina, "she would never accept it. I know her too well for that." "What!" said my wife, "she would accept money from her servant, and refuse it from us—impossible!" "She might take it, perhaps," said Mina, "but she would never again open her mind to me, and I should always be full of anxiety about her." Mina's view was right, and we now consulted as to the best means of conveying it, and pretended that Mina had gained it in a lottery, from a ticket presented by Triedelben, which ruse we felt might also enable us to help her on another occasion; but we sighed as we said so, for we had nothing more left, excepting Mina's pearls, worth about sixty crowns. Charles set off instantly with a letter from Mina, who walked a little way with him. Elizabeth was quite taken in by the story of the lottery. She greeted Charles with the warmest affection, and returned a very grateful letter to her sister, in which she told her how opportune her present had been; but we were distressed to find that the sum we had thought so large was nearly all used to liquidate pressing debts. Elizabeth husbanded the small remainder with rigid economy; but every letter renewed our anxiety; and, as her confinement approached, Wahlen used the whole proceeds of his harvest in purchasing the most lovely baby linen, and a beautiful cradle for the little stranger. We thought if we made no gift to our grandchild, after the story of the lottery ticket, it would seem odd, so we exchanged our pearls for gold and sent a handsome birthday gift.

We were all invited to the christening, but we thought it wiser for only Mina to go, and we awaited with anxiety the news of the accouchement, when an unexpected event occurred which disturbed all our plans. A letter filled with money arrived for Mina; she coloured on opening it, and looked nervously around her. "Is it from Wahlen?" said I. "No," replied she, mustering up her courage; "you must not be angry, my dear father, but I am engaged as governess in the family of Count Herbourg." Augusta anxiously enquired what were the duties of a governess? and I, to make Mina reflect well before she irrevocably decided, took care to exaggerate them and make the obligations appear as onerous as possible. Augusta exclaimed that it was far too servile and mean an office, so that I was obliged to explain that a governess was not a servant; but still I told Mina, in a tone of great grief, that I never expected to see a child of mine seek her bread from home. "Ah, my child," said I, "you know nothing of the world; your slightest faults will all be remarked upon, your good qualities unnoticed; here you meet with all indulgence, there you will be thankful for cold politeness. Perhaps you think it a noble and honourable task to train the youthful mind and form the heart; but think not to be permitted to do so. Your mother is not altogether wrong in saying you will be a servant, for though the highest in that position you will be the worst off,

and however much you may slave yourself for your pupils, you need not expect gratitude from the parents, for they consider your salary pays you, and all obligation cancelled." Poor Mina replied not; for her determination was fixed. She felt so much for Elizabeth. In vain did her mother beg her not to give her the misery of feeling that she was eating the bread of strangers whilst we had a crust left. "Dearest mother," said she, much moved, "it is not for myself; to share with you would be all happiness to me; but my poor sister, I must try to help her. They give me one hundred crowns a year, and very likely large presents also. I shall have much time to myself. My dress will cost but little, and I can follow good old Peter's example, and send what I do not require to Elizabeth to keep for me. Ah, dear, dear, sister, my love for you is strong indeed to make me willing to leave all, all I love." No one but myself knew what that all contained. I said to her, "My child, your sacrifice is no doubt suggested by some good angel, and I know you will not forget us; but may you forget all sorrow and find the happiness you deserve." She smiled and gave me her letter to read. It was from Madame Saltzbourg, with whom she had occasionally corresponded since uncle Frederic's death. My anxiety was not relieved by the perusal; it described Count Herbourg's house as most charming, the gayest in Berlin, and a perfect liberty hall; the Countess was devoted to amusement, and the Count most agreeable and attractive. I felt quite uneasy, and gave Augusta the letter. She returned it and said, "it is quite impossible; I cannot permit her to go." I encouraged her objections; but Mina said, "if I am not to be trusted I must be unworthy of the education I have received." "No, my child, but you know nothing of the dangers of the world." "Indeed," said she, colouring, "I am well aware of them." Saying which she left the room, but returned immediately with what we took to be a bible, as it was a large folio, but, to our astonishment and horror, there fell out several loose sheets, proving to be an English novel called *Clarissa*. My wife shrieked out with agony, saying, "what! another romance. Mina! and in your Bible!—wretched girl! it is too dreadful!" "Dearest Mother, it is but an old cover that I found. Forgive me! This book describes all that vice can do, and I fear it not." "It is a miserable preparation, Mina, and I am beyond measure shocked at your disobedience and profanity." My wife was so disturbed, and said so much to her child, that a complete acknowledgment of all her faults succeeded, and she confessed to her the misery which her romance reading had occasioned her, and the whole story of her attachment to Jalymann. Augusta could not understand the possibility of a girl giving away her heart unsought, and most fervently expressed her abhorrence of these pernicious books, and said she was fully convinced that Elizabeth's troubles were occasioned by them. I confess I felt a strong

desire to read *Clarissa*, which Mina seemed to think so powerfully written, and even Augusta, when in private, also read it, and admitted that if all romances were so well written she did not so much wonder at the attraction they had. But her disinclination to part with Mina was far stronger than before; however, we were at length forced to give way, and submit to the pain of seeing her depart for Berlin.

Poor girl! the house seemed quite desolate without her, for, even in spite of her trouble, she was the life and spirit of the family, and showed more strength of mind, and courage to meet difficulties, than any of us. She had always new contrivances, and was so clever that she could make an old thing look quite new. After she was gone Charles began again to talk of doing something for himself. We had no longer the means of sending him to college, and to make both ends meet at home was a hard matter to us. Triedelben happening to come and visit us, I imparted our troubles to him, rather hoping that he would offer to assist us. "He knows as much as I do," said I. "And perhaps he is weary of this quiet sort of life, and wishes to see something of the world," said Triedelben, "but he is too old for any mercantile profession, and, as you cannot afford the university, I should certainly let him go abroad and seek his fortune." Augusta and I were panic struck. "What! send him away without object or aim! never! if I were to sell my clothes off my back. I cannot think, Monsieur Triedelben, that your advice is that of a friend," said she. "Why you only make difficulties. You say you can teach him no more, and why should he not now do something for himself? A fine young fellow like him is sure to make his way. But there is something more to be learnt than languages; let him study mathematics; I will lend him books, and it will fit him for agriculture, architecture, the navy, or the artillery." "The artillery!" said Charles, with an enthusiasm that alarmed me, for I had once before heard him speak on the subject in a manner that made his mother nervous, for she was fearfully prejudiced against a soldier's life. "Yes," said Triedelben, "any profession that you please; but you must come into town with me, and I will get you the necessary things." Charles did so, and returned laden with books, which he began to study most diligently, assisted by our friend whose knowledge astonished me. He, however, did not stay very long, and when he went he took with him our second boy to apprentice him to a surgeon; and, as Charles's departure seemed almost inevitable, we began to think we should feel very lonely. We found Triedelben more difficult than ever to comprehend. We knew he was rich, and felt sure he greatly admired Charles; but still he would do nothing for him, and he only lent him the books he had purchased, merely giving him an old case of instruments, which required to be repaired before they could be used. Charles's talent for drawing delighted and surprised him, and he constantly

took him with him to give him information on subjects that his books did not teach him. On these occasions Charles assured us that there was nothing in Triedelben's establishment to confirm our supposition as to his wealth, for his table was quite as frugal as our own, and but for the gift of the pearl necklace to Mina, we should have considered him as much on a par with ourselves. I had once or twice joked him about the family he talked of when we first saw him, and the daughter whose marriage he said he was going to attend, but he always turned it off with a laugh, and confirmed Mina's idea that he had no children. His attachment to us, and his pleasure in our society, could not be doubted, and we felt convinced that if at any time we were really in need he would assist us. At present he clearly seemed to think us not badly off, for very often he would say to me, "What a happy family you are; yes, indeed, my dear Bemrode, you are greatly to be envied." However, I was far from easy at the extraordinary change which I perceived in Charles. Instead of the cold philosophic youth who used to argue every point, he now was full of life, always singing love ditties, and constantly reading poetry. The time for going to seek his fortune, originally fixed by Triedelben, was nearly over, and he seemed to think it much too long. He was always talking of the pleasures of a soldier's life, and spoke of entering the Prussian cavalry, which Triedelben rather encouraged, and we never ventured to oppose because we knew of nothing else; though we still hoped that when it came to the point Triedelben would relent and help him, especially as he advised him still to continue his theological studies. I therefore begged my dear wife to keep up her spirits, and leave matters to take their course. Whilst we rejoiced in the good accounts we constantly received from Mina, who regularly transmitted her salary to Elizabeth, and sent us many little presents, she appeared exceedingly happy and very much esteemed by her employers, and those she came in contact with. Elizabeth had two children, a girl and a boy. She still struggled on against poverty, and Wahlen was as devoted as ever to her. Mina gave us some faint hope of ultimately getting Count Herbourg to interest himself for Charles; and we, therefore, begged him to keep quiet, and not be in a hurry to leave home, as his mother's fondest desire was to see him enter the ministry, and our youngest son was taken by his uncle into his paper manufactory.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SORROW.

Being one afternoon engaged in conversation, and thinking needlessly we had fretted about many things, and how many things we really had to be thankful for, we came to the con-

clusion that Triedelben was quite right in saying that money alone could not purchase happiness, neither should we ever have known half the kindness and affection of our children but for the circumstances in which they had been placed; and though now more or less dispersed, our family union was not the least weakened thereby. "Ah," said Augusta, "if I could only think Charles might succeed you, or see him established in some neighbouring cure, I should have nothing left to wish for." A knock was heard at the door, and she retired. An officer in full uniform was announced to me. "Pastor," said he, "I have an unpleasant duty to perform." I trembled and entreated him at once to speak. "Your eldest son, I believe, is desirous of entering the Prussian service; but I am instructed to inform you that his country demands his services, and I must therefore claim him." I was panic struck; caught the officer by the hand, and was unable to speak. He kindly went on: "I dare say, sir, the young man is sharp and quick, and will soon get the better of his wildness." "What can you mean, sir?" said I; "my son is a steady, excellent young man, the pride and hope of his family, the joy of my heart and his mother's; he is not going to be a soldier, nor has he any intention of quitting home." Upon this he produced a paper, and said, "Pray, is not your name Bemrode? your son's name Charles? his height five feet eight? and was he not talking about entering the Prussian service?" "He has had such an idea, I know," said I, "because unhappily I am too poor to send him to college; but we have lately had hopes from another quarter, and surely, sir, you would not be so cruel as to disappoint us, and mar the prospects of so good a son, on whom all our hopes are fixed?" "My dear friend," said he, "fathers always talk thus; but I am much afraid that your son is a sad scamp and a dangerous character; but, be that as it may, my orders are imperative, and he must go." Just at that moment Charles came in. "That is him, I think," said the officer, eying him attentively. Charles saluted him, and then turning to me he said, "What is the matter, dear father? you look distressed." "This gentleman," said I, "has an order for your arrest; you are accused of being a dangerous character." The frank open countenance with which Charles met the officer's steady gaze, seemed at once to refute the charge. He handed him his order, and my son at once said, "I certainly have a great desire to be a soldier, not, sir, as you are pleased to suppose, from any unworthy motives, but because I feel in myself a consciousness that I shall not disgrace the profession." "Well said, young man, and I quite agree with you. Here is my hand." "Stop a moment, sir," said Charles, looking at me, "I must have my father's consent. My wishes are subservient to his." The officer entered into conversation with him, asked him about his studies, talked to him about the advantages of the service, and became every moment more kind and friendly.

towards him, so that I began to hope things would be settled according to my wishes. Charles showed him his plans and drawings, and he shook him warmly by the hand and whispered something in his ear; then turning to me, with an expression of tenderness and sympathy, he said he felt excessively sorry to pain us, but that his duty compelled him to take Charles off. "You must have some enemy," said he, "for you have been represented as a dissipated, dangerous character, and about to enlist in the Prussian service," "Impossible!" cried I, "I have not an enemy in the world." "But I have, dear father," said he, "and I know how it is. I care not myself, but what will my poor mother say?" I shuddered, for I already anticipated her despair, and her cries seemed already in my ears; I clasped my hands in agony. "Oh, my wife, my poor wife!" cried I. Charles addressed the officer, and said, "Sir, you are witness to the strong affection which my parents feel towards me; for myself I solemnly assure you that all my wishes and inclinations tend to a military life; but I have a mother, and the most tender of mothers. Ah, sir, is it possible to leave me with her?" "Impossible, absolutely impossible," said the officer; "my orders are imperative; I am to take you whenever I found you." "Well, sir," said Charles, "I see that there is no help for it, but I beg of you to repeat to my father, to whom, until this day, I have never caused a moment's pain, that which you so kindly said to me just now." The officer took his hand and said, "yes, excellent young man, I will, indeed, be to you a father. I will get you into the artillery, not as a common soldier, but as an officer; and I will regard you as my own son." This kindness brought back a ray of hope to my heart; but still my poor wife's distress was ever uppermost in my mind, and I was thinking if it would be possible to conceal it from her for a time by pretending that Charles had got the situation of secretary, when the door suddenly opened, and she rushed in, pale as death, and fainted in Charles's arms. She had seen a sergeant and file of soldiers in the court yard, had asked their business, and they had told her. Poor mother! She tried to throw herself at the officer's feet, but he prevented her; sent away his men, and then quietly explained everything to her. In vain did we try to console her, and we dared not tell her that her son was to be taken off immediately. "Oh, my child," said she, "I am ignorant who your enemy can be, but I would not wish him the misery of witnessing the scene his cruelty has produced, or seeing the agony which he has occasioned." Charles asked permission of the officer to absent himself for a few moments; he consented; but pressed his hand with a meaning look. He was gone a very short time, and returned looking more sad than before. Supper was shortly served, and the officer sat down with us; but no one could eat. He kindly renewed all his promises, and assured Augusta that he would act the part of a parent to her son. We passed a sad and

sleepless night, and at day-break Charles came in equipped for his journey. We gave him the little money we had left, to which my wife added a pair of ear-rings, the only trinket she possessed. When he had given us a reasonable time for our adieux, the officer reminded us it was getting late. "Oh, my God," said Augusta, "what a world this is! How canst thou permit the wickedness which every day takes place? Is it possible thou canst suffer a son to be thus cruelly torn from his mother?" "Dear madam," said the officer, much distressed, "God will bless both mother and son; his long suffering to wretched sinners is unbounded; and he knows all that I at this moment endure in performing the duty which is so painful to me. He alone can give me strength to go through with it; but he will do so, and enable you also to pray for, and bless me." At this moment the door opened, and Juliet Skinck, in dishabille, rushed into the apartment. Never before had we seen her at so early an hour. She had occasionally called to enquire after Mina, but always in a formal though friendly way. She tried to salute us politely, but tears choked her utterance. Charles caught her hand, and pressed it to his lips. "Oh, my dear, dear sir," said she, "is there no means of avoiding this?—no escape?" I shook my head, and squeezed her hand with gratitude for her kind interest. Charles put on a gay and careless air, and, taking up his hat said, "it is time to be off." "And is it thus you quit me," said Juliet, in a tone which astonished us; "Charles, Charles, I have no longer any secrets from your parents, for I trust they will one day look upon me as their child." Poor fellow! he could no longer stand it, but bade her the most tender farewell, saying, "Oh, my Juliet, shall we ever meet again?" and then, turning himself away, he made a sign to his officer, and departed. My poor Augusta went into her own room to pray for him. I longed to have gone with him to have a few more last words, but could not leave her in so terrible a state; I therefore threw open the window and, waving my hand, said, "bear up like a man." Alas, I could not follow the advice I gave; I was shook to the very centre, and went into my study, not even noticing poor Juliet, whose frank avowal of her affection had before greatly moved me.

Six weeks of wretchedness passed by without any intelligence of him, when Triedelben unexpectedly arrived; my wife got up and left the room, for she always coupled him with her son's misfortune. He directly asked for Charles, and I recounted to him all that had taken place, without concealing our opinion as to his being in some way the cause of it. He listened without interrupting me, but fixed his eyes on the ground, and when I had ended he said, "I do not yet give up all hope; I am indeed afraid I have more to do with this than even you think; but my intentions were good." He struck his forehead, and said, "Fool that I was! why could I not leave things alone? I ought to have

known what a man exposes himself to when he steps out of his sphere. Oh, my friend, if I did not feel sure of being able to get back my dear boy I should never forgive myself. I will tell you all, and how my pride and folly have led to this. Just because I have a lot of useless money, I have been trying to work out the ways of Providence, and to bring about arrangements to please myself instead of leaving them to be directed and governed according to his all-wise decrees." "Yes," said I "and I suppose that was the reason why you have always kept us in the dark as to who you are." "No, no," said he, "I have never concealed from you anything which it was important for you to know. But you recollect how I first made your acquaintance; well, I had my own views in coming to you; but from the moment I saw you I felt my heart drawn to you, for I had never seen such complete family union, or such good, simple people. I felt at the moment it would be cruel to enrich you, for you seemed so happy, that I would not run the risk of disturbing your content; but I always determined, in case of emergency, to come forward; and, for Elizabeth's tresseau, I gave Mina the pearls, knowing well the use she would make of them. I was quite proud of myself when you told me the success of my scheme, and felt I had drawn forth the charming dispositions of your children, and shewn my own discrimination of character; forgetful, alas, of that invisible hand which so often turns into folly the wisest contrivances of vain, ignorant man." "You speak in riddles, my friend." "I will soon explain myself," said he. "Wahlen, in whom I take a much deeper interest than you are aware of, has, I feel sure, an excellent heart, but he wants common sense to guide him; he is vain, expensive, and dwells too much on his expectations from his uncle, and this I felt sure would involve your Elizabeth in anxious care and trouble; and therefore I wished to correct him, and make him seek happiness in economy, mediocrity, and a simple country life; but I little thought my attempts to bring this about would so sadly involve you all in such distress. You and your children, to give aid to Elizabeth, and feed Wahlen's vanity, gave up all the money you had laid by for Charles; your excellent Mina hired herself as a governess for the same purpose, and I was all the while sure it would tend to no good; therefore I resolved to wait until Wahlen's extravagance had completely ruined you all, and then I meant to have gone to him and said, see what your folly and extravagance has been the cause of; you have completely ruined a family who, till they knew you, were happy and respectable; your brother-in-law, a young man of distinguished talent, will be obliged to enter a profession that tears him away from his family, and in which, indeed, he is liable, at any moment to be cut off; your sister-in-law, equally eminent for her virtue and accomplishments, the stay and comfort of her parents, is obliged to undertake a menial office to feed your folly and love

of useless gew-gaws. And what have you ever done for them but cause them anxiety and unhappiness? This was my object, my dear vicar, and on this account I abstained from coming forward to assist Charles, being foolish enough to suppose I could guide the wheels of Providence, and forgetting that it is not in vain man to dispose of events. I only wished to give Wahlen a useful lesson, and then I meant to do everything in my power for your son; but, alas, some vile person has maliciously marred all, and I have the misery of feeling that I have been the cause of sending your son away from you. My self-conceit is bitterly punished; but, alas, it is not the first time I have suffered from it." If Triedelben had communicated to me this plan before hand, I do not doubt but that I should have thought it clever and well-conceived, for it did seem to show a great "knowledge of human nature," but being unfortunately the sufferer by it I expressed my discontent, and exclaimed, "My poor boy!" and "how he loved you!" He was deeply moved, and said, "We will yet repair the evil. Where is he?" "Alas, I know not; he was to write and tell us his destination, but we have never heard." Triedelben threw down his hat, and again seated himself. His trouble rather softened me towards him, and when I was again alone with my wife I attempted to reconcile her, but when I gave her his explanation, instead of being softened, she exclaimed, "Horrible man! to gratify his stupid experiments he brings all this misery upon us." "Dearest wife, you know we have no real claim upon him." "But what right had he to play with the happiness of my children, or to humble Wahlen, and give him any of his lessons at our expense?" "Speak lower, dearest, he is in the next chamber." "Let him hear me; it is quite right he should know what a mother feels for her children." "Perhaps," said I, "the same thing might have occurred if we had never known him, and we cannot say he has wronged us." "Yes he has, for it was entirely through him Charles ever thought about the army, and it was his apparent interest that made us look to his help instead of leaving everything to Providence, as we did before we knew him. Even if these troubles had come upon us without his intervention I should not have felt so much, for I might then have felt it was all for Wahlen's good, and the Almighty would have enabled me to bear it; but when this man has done it all by his self-conceit, and proudly says, 'I will repair the evil,' I cannot stand it." "Dearest Augusta, his intentions were good." "No, no, they were not; for it was his pride that made him think he could direct everything, and that makes him now believe he can make me amends with his gold. Oh, no, no, he can never wipe away my tears. When the Almighty sends trouble he also enables us to feel it is right, and that in his own good time he will wipe our tears away; but this Triedelben acts just like the prince's tutor, who whipped his young companion whenever his

lord committed a fault." We were startled by a noise in the next room, and a gentle knock at the door, which was partly opened by Triedelben, who said, in a very humble voice, "Dear mamma, they have given me no pillow." "No pillow!" said she, with a very sudden change of voice; "I am very sorry, but pray take mine till to-morrow." "Thank you, thank you; but are you sure you can spare it?" "Oh, yes, certainly." "Oh, you good, kind creature. So you really wish to rest that head which has been the cause of so much sorrow to you? Do not, then, thrust thorns into this heart which loves you so tenderly. I deeply feel my wrongs, and deserve your abuse. I shall think of the tears which have moistened this pillow with deep heart-felt penitence. I do, indeed, see how wrong I was to make you subservient to my projects for another; but it was my head and not my heart you must blame. I take your pillow, dear mother, and feel sure you will wish me good night; but, indeed, indeed, the comparison of the prince's tutor was a little too hard." "Was it?" said Augusta, "well, I did not mean it." "You have given me a lesson stronger than what I meant for Wahlen," added he, "and I hope I shall never forget it; and now I will leave nothing undone to bring you back your Charles and Mina. Poor Wahlen does like a little show, and we will try to indulge him without allowing others to suffer by it." He and Augusta then shook hands very cordially, and he retired. When he closed the door she said, "he is not a bad man after all, he intended well, and if he does but get back my Charles I shall heartily thank him if he can reform Wahlen."

Next day we were all as friendly as usual, but Triedelben was very grave, and made us very minutely detail to him every particular, especially the visit of Juliet Skinck, and asked us a hundred questions about her character, habits, hours of walking, &c. &c., for it was quite clear the young people were engaged, though it was incomprehensible to us how they could have met; neither were we at all pleased at it, for we did not like her parents, and knew that her father would seek out a man of rank, and her mother a rich man to marry her. We looked at all the papers Charles had left, and found some fragments of letters, by which we were horrified to find that the Agent had found out, through Julia Goldman, the secret attachment of the young people, and that that was the cause of Charles being arrested, and denounced by Skinck as a very evil-disposed and dangerous character. I felt so embittered towards him, that I would willingly have gone a hundred miles off to avoid ever coming in contact with him. "Oh, my poor boy! my poor boy! we shall never see him more," said Augusta; "and the unfortunate speech which I had made about the livery servant is, perhaps, the cause of it all; you told me at the time he would never forgive it." "What!" said Triedelben, "is it possible you should tremble before such a man as this? What power has he to make honest people like you afraid?"

His brother-in-law is commissioner of the taxes, and his wife's uncle is the rich '*Conseiller Aulique*' C——, who has powerful interest with the government. Well, I am neither a government secretary, nor am I *conseiller aulique*," said Triedelben, "but I fear no man, and court no favour, and all I wish is that I knew where the boy is taken." After several more anxious days, we received a letter, telling us that his officer had treated him with the greatest kindness, and that every one showed him consideration and respect; that he was not yet attached to any regiment, but pursuing his studies for the artillery; that at first he was very nearly being sent into the ranks, where he would have been harshly treated; but, added he, "Triedelben's kindness has been of the most essential service to me, for my knowledge of drawing and mathematics soon brought me under the notice of the General, who begged me to give his son lessons, and also in English. My enemies took alarm, and tried to get me sent off as a private in a marching regiment, but the General declared he would represent my case to the King. We shall soon be on the move, but I know not when. My Colonel's brother applied to have me left with him, but was not successful. Every one says I have very powerful enemies, but I fear them not—I trust in God and those principles I was brought up in. I hope to merit the esteem of good men, and that is all I care for. Do not write till you hear again, for I may have left, and your letter would not reach me." Nevertheless, by Triedelben's advice, we did write, and enclosed our letters to the commanding officer. We soon got another letter, but equally uncertain as to his destination: he said, in it, "If Monsieur Triedelben is still with you, tell him it would not be easy to do what he advises. Thank him for his letter of credit on Hamburg; I have got it cashed; and some person, set as a spy upon me, knew of my presenting the draft, and has talked about it. Thank him cordially for his generosity, which I have accepted to please him, but assure him, that if he desires my happiness, he will not renew it. Part of it I used to procure myself things useful to me, and with a part of it I had the gratification of helping others worse off than myself." Much moved, I caught Triedelben's hand, and pressing it to my heart, said how I felt his kindness. "It was nothing," said he; "I only wished him to get a servant and some horses. Outside show is every thing in this despicable world. Charles, poor, would be oppressed; Charles, rich, is respected, looked up to; that is the way of the world: and his enemies will feel a little awkward when they find he has letters of credit to the amount of 10,000 crowns." "You terrify me," said I. "Have you reflected on the temptations this immense sum will put in his way?" "I fear not him," said he, "but I did it to cause a little excitement about him." "Dear friend, I still think it is rather like bravado; nor do I imagine it will soften our enemies, but rather irritate them against us. It is better to

remain in obscurity and be forgot, than irritate the powerful by attracting their attention, and putting them on trying to find out where my son gets his money." "You are right, you are right; your judgment is better than mine; and I shall soon envy your poverty, which leads you to see things in this cool manner. Riches make me proud, and wish to govern. To-morrow we will go and see Charles, and heaven grant we may bring him back with us."

We set off accordingly, full of hope, and in two days reached Hanau; and Triedelben left us at the inn whilst he went to make enquiries, in order to release our son: he did not return till quite late, and his countenance told how fruitless his errand had been. "He is gone," said he; "but fear not, God will be with him." "In the name of heaven tell us all," said I; "Where is he?" "At Stadt." "Oh! that is not all," said Augusta, "speak out at once, and tell us all your looks betray." "Well," said he, "you shall hear the whole of the infernal plot:—In his walks Charles fell in with Skinck's daughter, they formed an attachment, and when they could not meet they wrote to one another. Miss Goldman found it out, and informed the Agent; he tried to frighten his daughter into giving up her engagement; she resisted, and Goldman got hold of their letters. Charles had expressed his hope of making his fortune in the Prussian service; and by calumnies and intrigues they represented him as a dangerous character, and got him arrested; and now, seeing that he has powerful friends, they have succeeded in getting him sent off to Madras." "Oh! my God," cried I, looking towards Augusta, whom I expected to see fainting in my arms, but, to my extreme astonishment, she was less moved than I was, and only said, "What sort of a place is Madras?" I dared not remind her it was in India, but only said, "it is a long way off." "Ah!" said she, "I feel sure that God will take care of him; only last night I dreamed"—I could not let her go on, and said, "what signifies a dream, dearest? our troubles are too real for dreams." "But," said she, bewildered, "when he must be a soldier, it does not much signify whether it is Madras or Stadt; only tell me where Madras is." I pretended I could not exactly recollect, for I wished to prolong as much as possible her happy ignorance, and therefore made some pretence for getting her out of the room to hold a consultation with Triedelben, but in the passage she met the landlord and I heard her ask him where Madras was; I followed directly but too late, for he had just informed her it was in the East Indies. It was a long while before we could restore her to consciousness; her imagination seemed to seize on all the miseries she had ever heard or read of—earthquakes, whirlpools, wild beasts, cannibals, shipwrecks, &c. &c. "I," said Triedelben, "passed many years in India," and he began to describe his voyage and the country; but, though she appeared to listen, he

ideas wandered still, and when she heard him say he was six months at sea, she gave up all hope of ever seeing her son again. We then tried to give her some notion of what a ship was like, but she could not listen, and was altogether despondent. "We will go to Stadt," said I, "and Charles shall show you"—"Will you, will you, indeed?" said she, falling on my neck weeping—"shall I really see him once more?" "Yes, you shall, indeed; and then you will see, yourself, the ship he sails in; it is not the least like the small boats you have been accustomed to." She retired to prepare for her journey, and Triedelben expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of taking her, saying, "he half dreaded what effect the sight of the sea might produce. It is sometimes an awful spectacle," said he; "and when she thinks that the vessel we show her is to convey her son across that immense space, I much fear it will only add to her distress." "No, no," said I, "her poor heart must be satisfied; she must bid her son adieu; and I also must give him my blessing. Oh! Triedelben, you are not a father!" "If I am not," said he, "I know how to feel as one; we will go, and all that man can do for him, I will." We started that evening, and arrived without accident at Stadt. Triedelben directly went in search of Charles; in half an hour, which appeared to us the longest we had ever known, they both came back. "My Charles! my Charles!" cried Augusta, throwing herself into his arms. He had been four months absent, and was much improved in every way; tall, stout, and healthy, and his uniform became him exceedingly. Had we been able to forget India, the sight of him would have enchanted us. When Triedelben exacted our remaining at the inn, I half thought he wished to prepare him for what he had best say to us; but the real enthusiasm with which he spoke of his profession could not be feigned, and it revived our courage and comforted us. His Captain was brother to the officer who arrested him; he treated him with great kindness, and promised to promote him the earliest opportunity. Triedelben procured for him every thing that could make his voyage agreeable, and he left us much alone with Charles. Augusta became more reconciled, especially when she found the landlord had been several times to India, and thought nothing of the passage. The Captain gave him leave till the vessel sailed. Triedelben went to Hamburgh, and brought back a quantity of merchandise for Charles to trade with. He also gave him a large sum of money, several letters of credit and introduction to the chief English merchants; and he gave a grand dinner to all the officers of the regiment and the ship. "I hope and believe, my boy," said he, "that this voyage will be of great use to you; and I strongly recommend you to study navigation." The Captain of the ship was an old friend of Triedelben's, and promised to treat Charles as a son, saying, he had no doubt he should be able to get him into the company's service.

At last the sad day of departure came, and he asked us to come and visit his ship. He showed us all the arrangements, and pointed out everything, and Augusta was so delighted that she seemed to think it impossible that either winds or waves could injure so magnificent a vessel. Just then the port holes were opened and I happened to see the waves dashing in foam over a jutting point of land, and beyond an immense line of sand banks, against which the spray and the sea broke. The rays of the setting sun shone brightly on several distant vessels, which looked like specks, and then there seemed nothing but sea and sky till it was impossible to distinguish the difference. A shuddering sensation seized me as I beheld an immense vessel rounding the point, and, by the way it dipped in the water, I thought it must be in great danger, and I expected every moment to see it disappear. "Oh, heavens!" said I, "it will be swallowed up." Triedelben smiled, and said there was not the slightest danger, and that the weather was quite calm. "Ah, such is life," said I. "how often have I thought everything against me because I did not know what real trouble was; but now, alas,"—— "Stop," said my friend, "do not be ungrateful; the same gracious Hand that has all along supported you will still continue to guide you, and all the blessings he has bestowed upon you in your family should make you rejoice. Can you not fondly bestow your benediction on your noble son, and look with hope to seeing him return?" We were interrupted by loud cheers of welcome. The vessel I had been so alarmed about had cast anchor. The setting sun gilded the horizon with the most brilliant colours. Boats filled with people were moving out of the harbour, and huzzas and shouts of joy thrilled through the air. I looked on the scene as a happy omen, and went into Charles's cabin. "God bless you, and be with you, my boy; he will I am certain, and bring you back to us again, that our thanksgiving may ascend like the happy greetings we now hear. Come, dear Augusta, we must leave him: but we shall see him again." The captain joined us, and said we were right to take our leave, for the troops would soon be on board, and the vessel would then put out to sea. Triedelben had a long conversation with Charles, and again recommended him to Mr. Elsworth, and we rose to depart. The band of the regiment was playing to the troops as they embarked; a general cheer was given, and we descended into the boat. After leaving us safely at the inn, Triedelben returned to remain with Charles as long as the ship was near the coast. We watched the troops defile, and I then wished to lead Augusta into the carriage, which was waiting for us: but she entreated with tears to stay as long as she could see anything of her son. She imagined she could distinguish him for several moments, and then, bursting into loud sobs, she stretched forth her arms to the sea, with an expression I can never forget, and exclaimed, "My Charles! My Charles!"

A person standing near, who was much moved at the sight of her grief, said, "If you go to a village about five miles off, the ship will cast anchor there, and very early in the morning you may perhaps see your son again." "Oh, let me go! let me go!" cried she, running to the carriage. The coachman knew the place, and drove us to a hill, from which we had a very extensive prospect of the sea. The wind was fresh and the waves much agitated. I began to fear my wife's apprehensions would return, and tried to persuade her to descend the hill, but in vain. She kept her eyes fixed on the sea, and anxiously watched the direction in which the ships would come. At about two we discovered them, and, as I dreaded a second parting, I was quite glad when I heard that it was too rough to cast anchor. To us it appeared quite a storm, and Augusta offered up her prayers for her son. The people standing by said the wind was quite favourable. We watched one ship after another sail by, till the last was lost to view, and I then wished to drive back to Stadt, but found it necessary to remain for the night at the village, till Augusta should be a little recovered; she seemed almost in a state of torpor and despair, which affected me inexpressibly. I was, therefore, rejoiced when I saw Triedelben come in with a note from Charles, telling us the vessel was a first-rate sailer, and that they expected to reach Madras in three months.

We had a sad journey home, and, as Wahlen's house was not far out of the way, Triedelben proposed to give Augusta the sweet consolation of seeing her child. We left the carriage at the entrance of the village, and took a short cut across the fields. Triedelben was absorbed in thought and did not speak. "What are you thinking of?" said I. "Of the last time we came here, when I employed myself in trying to mend the chinks in Wahlen's windows. I am thinking now how I shall best reach his conscience, and of the lecture I shall give him." I thought to myself that my son-in-law might choose to dispense with lectures from a stranger, and ask his right to interfere with his concerns, so I made him promise to defer, at any rate, till the next day what he might have to say. We slipped quietly into the house; the sitting room door was open; Elizabeth was seated at her spinning wheel, very neatly dressed; her eldest child, our little Lolotte, sitting on the ground by her; whilst she was singing to the infant in the cradle. "Again, mama," said the child as she finished the couplet, "again." We watched for some moments the interesting scene; till Augusta, no longer able to constrain herself, cried, "Elizabeth!" and held out her arms, which the precious girl rushed into with a scream of joy. The room was furnished just as it should be for a farm house; all useless luxury had disappeared and given place to appropriate and convenient things. Triedelben smiled with pleasure; but I was half afraid poverty had been the cause of it, till Elizabeth's cheerfulness reassured me.

She placed her dear little girl in our arms, and said, "I have doubled my joys, and all these blessings are yours." The maternal and filial feelings of her heart beamed forth in her eyes, and she looked more lovely than ever. I took the dear children in my arms and gave them my blessing. The boy was called Charles after me and her brother. Poor Augusta's voice trembled as she clasped the child to her bosom, and pronounced the name, in a voice which showed where her thoughts were. Each moment we observed further improvements. Poor old Peter no longer wore his faded coat, gilt buttons, and silk stockings, but a sensible frieze, which showed marks of labour. Triedelben went into the yard, examined everything, and came back delighted. "My dear young friend," said he, "I rejoice at all I see, and feel convinced of your happiness. When does Monsieur Wahlen return? I had one of my sermons in store for him, but I see it is not needed." "My happiness is perfect," said Elizabeth, raising her eyes to heaven; "I have every blessing to thank God for, and make me trusting and confiding; and, my dearest father and mother, I was always convinced it would be so. My Wahlen was always too affectionate, his heart too kind. I only feared he would not see matters in their true light, till distress brought him to it; but his true and kind heart found out all—he is so good—so considerate—he thinks of everything." She knelt down as if to lift the baby from his cradle, but it was evidently to pour out her heart to her heavenly Father.

When we were alone she gave me an account of the manner in which her husband had discovered the real state of his affairs; every moment with some fresh expression of her love and admiration of him. Poor Peter, having long seen his mistress's deep anxiety and severe efforts to bring things right, one day took the great liberty (as he said) to speak to his master on the subject, who had not the most remote idea that anything was wrong. He was much annoyed, and gave a cold reply to his remonstrances. Peter, nothing daunted, continued his representations, till Wahlen sharply ordered him to be silent. At this moment Elizabeth entered, and Peter retired, overwhelmed with grief. Elizabeth, observing this, said, "My dear Wahlen, what ails the old man? He should not leave you in grief." "He should not forget that he is my servant, and all that I have done for him." "Dearest husband, if you only knew all that this poor old man has done for us"—"Done for us! what can you mean?" Elizabeth was embarrassed, and tried to evade answering, but he insisted, and she was obliged to tell him that Peter had not only placed all his wages in her hands under the pretence of getting her to take care of them, but that he had paid several urgent debts, which she only accidentally discovered. Wahlen was greatly moved and his pride much hurt, and he begged Elizabeth at once to call back Peter, ¹ addressing him in a very kind but rather proud manner.

he said, "good old man, I understand now your observations. Tell me all I owe you, both for your wages and what you have advanced; I can easily retrench in other things." "Sir, master, dear Monsieur le Baron," said Peter, catching his hand and respectfully kissing it, while the big tear drops fell from his aged eyes, "I am happy, a thousand times happy, in giving that trifle, which your own bounty bestowed upon me. My young mistress will take care of me, and you will allow me to end my days with you. But, master, forgive me, I cannot bear to watch all the anxiety and care of this sweet young lady, and see her health failing, because"——"Because what, Peter?" then turning to Elizabeth, he said, "What does he mean? Uneasy! What about?" She coloured, stammered, and taking his hand, said, "Nothing, dearest; old Peter does not understand ladies, or know the pleasure it gives them to perform a hundred kinds of work, which he looks upon as mere drudgery." Peter shook his head, and, regardless of all her signs, he said, "It is too true, sir, she is killing herself; she deprives herself of rest and of every thing for you, sir; and you are the only person ignorant of the sacrifices she makes." "Peter, Peter," cried she, with an attempt to laugh him down, "I deprive myself of nothing. You sometimes look at my dress as if you thought I wore it too long; but you know every dress the Baron gives me is so dear to me I should never like to part with it." "Oh, that is not it, my lady; that is not what makes you sit up half the night, as you do." "Sit up," said Wahlen, "what do you mean?" "Nonsense, nonsense; you know, dear, how fond I am of early rising, and that I have always been used to it, and delight in my spinning wheel." "Dear young lady, you cannot persuade me that it is either for pleasure or from custom that you rise at three o'clock in these cold bleak mornings, to spin by lamp light, and that you mend the house linen and my master's, and make your own and the children's clothes, and do the work of at least four servants; it cuts me to the heart, and I cannot hold my tongue. And you know when the Baron is away, though you go through the form of your meals, you never use any thing but a little bread and milk." "Fie, Peter! I am not hungry when your master is away," said Elizabeth, in vain trying to hide her tears; "what is the use of talking in this foolish manner?" "Madam, it is but just and right that my dear young master should know what an excellent wife he has, and that but for you he would have been ruined long ago. Ah, Sir, it is the money which she earns which pays your debts; and when you bring her home presents, and things she does not want, have I not seen the tears they cost her when you were gone, because she knew that, instead of adding to your mutual comfort, they were only plunging you into greater difficulty, and redoubling her useless labour and sorrow." Elizabeth was quite overwhelmed, she could not stop him, nor could she

utter a word. Peter had been drawn on beyond what he intended, and said, "Pardon me, my dear lord, if I have offended; I could not bear to see you going on in ignorance of your affairs. I have known you from an infant, I owe all to your family, I know your heart, and I am sure you would rather bear the truth." "Thank you, good, excellent Peter; you have not offended me; on the contrary," said he, taking his hand, "I am most deeply grateful to you. But, Elizabeth, did I deserve this want of confidence on your part?" "Dearest husband, in the beginning I did try to show you that we were living above our means. You thought I was deceived, and I could not bear to annoy you or render you uneasy. You indulged in false hopes, and I as foolishly thought I could bring all straight by my own industry; but you never knew how that money was acquired, and therefore you spent it." "But why did you not remonstrate, Elizabeth?" "I did sometimes remind you of Tiedelben's advice, but I never could bear that you should see that I was anxious; but now that poor old Peter's excess of affection has completely unveiled the truth, I will confess, dearest, that I was pained to receive from my parents and sister that money which I knew they could so ill afford, and which Mina ought rather to have given to help my father. I will now show you her letters." She took out a packet and gave them to him; he read them with deep emotion, and said, "How guilty I am! Is it possible that I have really been the cause of sending her from home? and was it for me that your parents have been deprived of all their comfort? I believe that story of the lottery was all an invention. Ah, Elizabeth! I have been blind, stone blind; but the bandage is now fallen from my eyes for ever, for ever, my beloved; and we will now be truly happy." He was so anxious to carry out his reform, that Elizabeth had great difficulty in preventing his adopting the dress of a peasant. "If a man does not at once break his chains," said he, "he may wear them for ever." "A strong resolution formed in the spirit of prayer is almost a victory gained," said Elizabeth; "and the greatest triumphs of virtue are those which are performed in secret, and call forth no observation." "Oh, no, no! Elizabeth, I have too long sacrificed every thing to silly pride; I now detest it, and wish at once to begin the simple life of a farmer, and dress in a manner conformable to my station." "Well, dearest, wear what you like, if you pay for it; but let us strive to economy in every thing." They did so: Elizabeth undertook the dairy, which before he had not suffered her to meddle with; and a little room by the boudoir, he had so elegantly fitted up, served admirably for it. The whole house by degrees assumed the appearance of a most comfortable farm; and their arrangements and dress were daily more in accordance with their employment; they dispensed with two useless servants, and these changes were gradual, that they attracted no observation. Exercise and

appetite seasoned their meals, which Elizabeth prepared with the greatest neatness; their mutual affection changed their labours into pleasures; whilst he arranged his accounts or prepared his plans, Elizabeth brought her work and her infant, and sat down by him; and she took him his dinner into the fields, which they together partook of under the shade of a tree. At first Wahlen found it a little difficult to persevere, but he considered it a point of honour, and at last it became so agreeable to him, that, in a moment of enthusiasm, he actually sent to his uncle the title deeds, which his father had retained copies of, as a proof of his fraudulent conduct; and he begged his wife to say nothing of the happy change to us, that we might enjoy the happiness of a surprise when we came to them. "Ah!" said Elizabeth, "the storms are indeed gone by, and our cheerful, happy condition is the more enjoyable from the contrast." "Storms!" said Augusta, with a meaning glance at me, which I understood, "and those which our dear Charles will have to pass through he will be spared and supported in, I am sure." "Let us never cease to trust in God, dear wife, and he will, I am sure, bring good out of evil." "Ah!" said Triedelben, who had joined us, "God has blessed, where my folly would have brought a curse. My sermon is, I find, much more needful for myself than for Wahlen. I trust for the future I shall remember this lesson, and try to do all the good I can, without daring to interfere with the designs of Providence, but strive to be led by them in humility and prayer. And you, too, my friends, do not fret yourselves with anxious thoughts for Charles; commit him to the Almighty; for whether on the stormy ocean, or in India, he is as much under his protecting care as in your own home."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE UNCLE.

The following day Elizabeth was playing and singing on the piano—for, though devoted to her duties as a farmer's wife, she never forgot that her taste and expression in playing had first attracted Wahlen's heart towards her—we were listening with perfect happiness and delight, when Peter rushed into the room in terror, and said, "My Lord's uncle, the old Baron, is here." Elizabeth jumped up pale and trembling, Augusta was scarcely less alarmed, and I felt equally nervous, when I thought of the man's character. Triedelben, who was playing with the child, was the only one unmoved. "Oh!" said Elizabeth, "I wish Wahlen had been at home." "God help us!" said Peter, "the carriage is already in the yard. Do you not think, my lady, you had better go and speak to him?" "No," said Triedelben, "it is more proper that she should receive him in the house." The bell

rung, and the Baron alighted, and was ushered in. We all remained seated, whilst Peter introduced him, with a thousand bows and scrapes. "Who is at home?" said he. "Madame la Baronne, my Lord." "Is she alone?" "No; her family are with her." "What, the parson, I suppose? Well, I am glad of it." Hearing this, Augusta became still more frightened, and placed herself before me, as if to guard me from harm. "Compose yourselves, my dears, and fear not," said I, "God will protect us." "You could not have said a more silly thing at such a moment," said Triedelben; "What have you to fear? The dignity of your office should sustain you, and your daughter's position"—"Dear Elizabeth, recollect yourself, you are the Baron de Wahlen's wife, the niece of this man." The Baron at this moment burst into the room; he was magnificently dressed, with a brilliant star on his breast; he eyed us all round, and then, addressing Elizabeth, said, "Pray, are you the parson's daughter?" She only bowed in reply. "And that, I suppose," pointing at me—"is my father, sir." "And the other, I conclude, is your respectable mother. I am charmed to see the holy family assembled. And who may that be?" pointing at Triedelben. Till this moment our friend had not taken the slightest notice; he continued playing with the child; but now, turning his head, he said, pointing at him with his pipe, "Who in the world is this gentleman, that is passing us all under review?" Elizabeth cast a supplicating glance at him, and the Baron a look of fury, which did not in the least disturb his equanimity. "My worthless nephew, I find, is out." No answer to this speech being made, he turned to Elizabeth, and said, "Pray, young woman, will you answer me?" She, poor girl, was too much upset by his brutality, so I replied, "My son-in-law is out." "Your son-in-law! I recommend you not in my presence to speak thus of my nephew." "The son-in-law of my friend, the Vicar, the young Baron de Wahlen, is from home," said Triedelben. The Baron looked contemptuously at him, and throwing himself back on the sofa, said, "I have got into nice company." "You are to be pitied, indeed," said Triedelben, "but ourselves still more." "What, sir?" said the Baron, starting up in a rage. "Perhaps you think," said Triedelben, "that your society is very agreeable to our hostess and her parents." "I have no intention that it should be, sir;" and then addressing me, he said, "You may rest assured, sir, that I did not come to thank you for the fine match you have made for my nephew." Triedelben's coolness had raised my courage, and I said, with dignity, "Be fully persuaded, my Lord, that it was totally against my wishes." "Against your wishes! No doubt," said he, with an insulting laugh; "no doubt you have done me immense honour; but allow me to tell you, sir, my nephew's folly has lasted long enough, and I doubt not by this time he feels it so. The violent love he pleaded, in extenuation of his absurdity, by this

time has cooled; and what you looked for, sir,—that your daughter was to be a rich Baroness—will not come to pass, for if she continues a Baroness, it will be a poor one; but if you choose to listen to reason, I would not stick at a few thousand crowns, and a legal separation is very easily”——Elizabeth shrieked with horror, and indignantly retorted, “Sir, we are not noble, it is true, but you have no right to insult us; and if you continue”——“Well, what, sir, is to happen, if I do?” said he, stepping up to me. A nervous creeping came over me, but a glance from Triedelben reassured me, and I continued, “My Lord Baron, you pretend to despise us, but I know who is the most deserving of contempt.” “What is that you know, sir?” “He knows who is the most deserving of contempt,” said Triedelben. “How dare you to address me? I was talking to the parson,” said he, infuriated. “My Lord Baron, as a friend of your nephew’s I mean to protect his wife from insult, and not one more insulting word will I permit you to address to her.” “And pray, sir, who are you?” “A man capable of restoring you to your senses, my Lord.” “Do you dare to threaten me, sir? and in this house?” “Calm yourself, my Lord, and tell us what you want; what do you desire of *Monsieur de Wahlen*, or his family?” “I desire,” said he, “to make known to the young man who disgraces my name, that he need indulge in no expectations from me, for I shall leave all I have to my wife’s family.” “You hear, Elizabeth?” said Triedelben. “Yes,” said she. “And you can bear it?” “Perfectly, so as he does not disturb our happiness.” “Well, my Lord, you see your money is as little regarded as your threats.” “Confound you all! I will soon show you who is master here. You had best ask your husband what he knows about a certain contract he entered into before he went abroad. Pray do you know any thing of it?” Elizabeth turned white as ashes, and said, “My husband has told me of it, but said you would never be so base as to ruin the only son of your brother.” “What is the matter?” said Triedelben. “Oh! a mere trifle,” replied the Baron; “only that this house, in which every one has thought proper to insult me, is my own, that is all.” “It is too true,” said Elizabeth; “My husband, when going on his travels, in sport gave a donation of this property to his uncle.” “I do not joke on such subjects,” said the Baron, “and so my nephew will find.” “My husband did not think you capable of this, my Lord, when he sent you back those papers which contained the proofs of that which would ruin you.” “Yes, yes!” said he, with a horrid laugh, “I have those papers, and nothing can prevent me now from retaining the possession of all my family rights. Do you hear this, Mr. Protector?” Augusta seized my arm to prevent herself from fainting. “Sir,” said Triedelben, in an agitated tone, “you have in your power the happiness of an entire family. Look at this little child, and think that the blood of your

father and your brother flows in its veins; and your brother, who was a most excellent man"——"Excellent, indeed!" said he, in an ironical tone, "for he made just such a marriage as his son. and broke his father's heart by it." "My Lord Baron, it is impossible you can be serious; you could not reduce an innocent family to utter ruin, and particularly if there is any truth in what your nephew has told me." "What do you mean, sir? what has he told you?" "You could not, I am sure you could not, plunge such near relations in misery." The more supplicating Triedelben's tone became, the more the Baron's countenance assumed a harsh and fierce expression. "Trouble not yourself," said he, with a disdainful tone, "to speak to me; your submissions and entreaties come rather too late; I have made my proposals to the young woman." Elizabeth haughtily requested that he would not insult her by renewing them, and said, "you are welcome to all, even this little farm; we can still work for our bread, and we shall be happier than you." "Yes," said Triedelben, "you will be happy, for your hearts are so noble that you can give up every thing but honour, love, and virtue." He then took Lolotte by the hand, and leading her to the Baron, said, "Look at this innocent, and take pity." The cruel man turned away his head with rage, and pushed her away. "Take her, poor mother," said Triedelben, putting her into her mother's arms, "he is insensible to every good feeling, and deserves no consideration." Then turning to the Baron again, he said, "Inhuman man!" "It is now my turn," said the Baron, "and I treat with contempt both your supplications and your abuse; but beware how you irritate me too far." "I do not intend to spare you, and I know that which will soon calm you, my Lord; for the guilty may be made to tremble, even when they think they have every thing their own way; and I tell you again, you are a monster of deceit and cruelty." I actually trembled with apprehension; the Baron made a rush towards him, but he kept him at arm's length, saying, in a firm tone, "Pray, sir, do you know the lawyer Schamel?" The Baron turned pale, and rage and confusion were alike depicted on his countenance. "We shall meet again, sir," said he, trying to make for the door; but Triedelben placed himself before it, and said, "You see, barbarous man, that I have the secret of touching a heart like yours. I am not a great Lord, it is true, but that which I know about you places me infinitely above you, and, brave as you are, I have you in my power." "You are a pretty fellow to threaten me, sir," said the Baron, affecting to assume an air of contempt and to put on a fierce look. "We shall see, my Lord; but you will be good enough to remember that I have been with Mr. Schamel, and have taken him exactly on that point in which knaves of his species are peculiarly accessible; neither honour nor conscience, nor the fear of God or terrors of hell, but the certainty of the gibbet or the gallows

You, my Lord, got hold of him in another way. Money is doubtless an excellent method with persons of his description; but in this instance mine is the most effectual, for it at once procured me a certain book bound in red. Why do you start, my Lord? Did you ever see it? Yes, I see you do know it as well as I do, and therefore you can understand how I was able to make Mr. Schamel speak, and also to agree to whatever I proposed. And you, my Lord Baron, will no doubt have the kindness to do the same. Elizabeth, be so good as to send for the attorney of the place, and desire him to bring two witnesses." She went out to obey his orders, and Augusta and I, perfectly petrified, looked on our friend almost as a supernatural being. "What do you want?" said the Baron, making a strong effort to recover his self-possession; "don't presume to play upon me, sir; you are mistaken if you think"—"And pray, my Lord, what do I think? Shall I tell you what you are thinking of at this moment?" "How can this devil of a man know so much of my private affairs?" The Baron threw himself back in his chair, rested his lips on the head of his cane, and the working of his countenance and change of colour sufficiently betrayed the agitation he suffered. "I will go," said he, starting up, "who will dare detain me? Do your worst, sir, but remember I will make you repent it." "You stir not," said Triedelben, with determination. "Who is to hinder me?" said he, moving to the door. "Your conscience! Remember the first page of that red book; it is signed by the Count de Bendorf." The Baron stopped short, and cast his eyes on the ground. "You will stop, my Lord, and you will agree to all I ask." The attorney and his witnesses at this moment came in. "Be good enough to draw me an agreement," said Triedelben, "for the Baron de Wahlen to make over to his niece, the young Baroness here present, the sum of 20,000 crowns, to be paid within a fortnight." "20,000 crowns!" said the Baron, in a low voice. "Do your worst; we shall meet again, sir." "It is not one farthing more than is due: you know in your conscience it is the exact sum the Count's fortune amounted to." The Baron answered not, but turned deadly pale, and the attorney drew the deed, he affixed his name, and the witnesses signed. He then handed it to Elizabeth, who, hesitating, said, "It is not, it cannot be right, to accept any thing by force from my husband's uncle." Triedelben insisted, but she was not to be shaken. "You perceive, my Lord, you have to do with those who judge in a manner to which you are unaccustomed. The husband gives you up papers which he might have used to your ruin, and the wife refuses the restitution of his just rights. Elizabeth, your uncle gives you nothing but what is properly your own. Is it not so, sir?" "Yes, yes!" said he, quickly; "take the deed—it is yours. And now, sir," turning to Triedelben, "what guarantee do you give me of your silence?" "None, sir; this is not a contract, but an act of jus-

ties. And even if I did promise silence, would that make you feel easy? No, no! the first punishment of guilt is to lose all confidence in others." "How, sir! do you give me no promise in return for such a sum as this? am I to be your dupe?" "No, my Lord," said Triedelben, with a look of inexpressible dignity, which made him cast down his eyes to the ground, "I never duped any one. Take back your deed—tear it up—it is your own." The Baron hesitated, but shame got the better of avarice: he restored it to Elizabeth, and said, "I know I have no right to it, but beware, sir, how you ever speak of this matter." "I think you threaten me," said Triedelben, with perfect calmness. "No, sir, I do not." "That is well; we will then close this business; you have doubtless with you the donation your nephew playfully made out of this farm; you will produce it." The Baron took it from his portfolio, Triedelben read it and tore it up, saying, "it should be your wish, my Lord, that we could as easily destroy the remembrance of all you have done. And what purpose has all your cruelty and injustice served for a son long since consigned to his grave? If during his life you had any shadow of excuse, his death destroyed all your plans, and yet you persevered in your guilt, and what have you gained? Nothing but remorse for a crime your own heart condemned. I know you; you were not always what you are now. In your youth you were kind and generous, but pride was your ruin; it embroiled you with a brother who tenderly loved you, and whose last breath implored his son not to disgrace you, saying, 'he is my brother, and he once loved me.' Oh, how could you in cold blood work out the ruin of his boy, the son of your generous brother?" The Baron was visibly affected, though he tried to hide it, and said, "I treated him as my own son, and would have made him my heir." "Yes, because he bore your name, but for no other reason; and when he wished to make himself happy by giving his hand to this truly noble and excellent woman, you disinherited him. You never pardoned your brother's marriage, though you could not really pretend to disapprove it. It was merely because he was more successful than you, and your hatred was solely caused by jealousy. But what wrong did your nephew ever do you?" "In heaven's name, who are you," said the Baron, "who thus pretend to read my soul?" "One who knows you and your conduct thoroughly, and has you in his power." The Baron clasped his hands in a sort of involuntary supplicating way. "You need not fear," said Triedelben, "I had hoped to awaken better feelings, and worked shame and repentance in you." He then quitted the room with a look more of sorrow than anger, and we all felt ourselves in a most awkward position.

I stole a side glance at him, and saw he looked quite crushed. I felt as if I ought to speak, and stammered out something about the badness of the roads; but no sooner had I made the silly and

insignificant remark, than I blushed and felt how absurd I was. Augusta twitched my sleeve, and the Baron in an absent but gentle tone said the roads were very bad; she then thought it best to go on, and said, it was very disagreeable travelling in bad roads. Triedelben in the next room heard us, and afterwards told me how infinitely ridiculous we appeared, and that the sentimental tone in which we made the vapid remarks rendered them even more stupid. "Pray, who is that gentleman who has just left the room?" said the Baron. I hardly knew what to say, but after a moment's pause replied, "a most excellent man, a little warm, but kind and benevolent to every one." "Do not think quite so badly of me as he does," said he, in a voice of great emotion; "it is my earnest desire to come to friendly terms." Elizabeth timidly approached him, and held out the deed to him, saying, "As you resign our farm to us, take this; I am perfectly satisfied, and want no more." "No, no," said he, looking nervously towards the door through which Triedelben had gone. "I will never speak of it to any one," said she. "But, my dear, you know the Baron himself said it was your husband's right," said I. "Father, it is impossible; it would be at the expense of my happiness." "His Lordship knows you had nothing to do with it," replied I. "It is not that," said Elizabeth, "but I tremble at the effect this immense sum may produce on our happiness; I therefore again beg you, my Lord, to resume it; we have all we require, and I only ask your affection towards my husband and myself." The Baron looked at her as if to penetrate her inmost thoughts, and then gently put the paper in his pocket. "Thank you," said Elizabeth, "you have indeed relieved me from a weight of anxiety; and you, my father, I implore you to say nothing to our friend." I could not help thinking her act inconsiderate and hasty, and urged some objections. The Baron sat down and looked from one to the other. Elizabeth told me she had weighty reasons for her conduct, and spoke in an earnest manner of the happiness of a life of industry and moderation; "But," said I, "you forget it is your husband's property, and how will he like your taking it upon you to dispose of his rights?" "My father, Wahlen loves me, we have but one heart and mind. So vast a sum, and the manner in which it was obtained, would make me wretched; I could not look any one in the face." "My child, you are right; but we must not let Triedelben know." Augusta embraced her child with tears, and said, "God will bless you, and make you amends, my Elizabeth." I felt quite proud of such a daughter, and full of contempt for riches compared with such nobleness of mind; but, alas! a sort of secret triumph over the Baron mingled with and poisoned these sentiments. I got up, and paced up and down the room with long strides, and turning to him with an air of satisfaction, I said, "Keep your gold, my Lord, we do not want it; the truly rich are those who can dis-

pense with wealth." After looking at us for some moments with a kind of bewildered air, he again took the deed, and presenting it to Elizabeth, said, "I entreat you to receive it from me as my free and voluntary gift." She took it, but tore it in pieces with perfect composure, whilst I strode on even more proudly than before, and ready to exclaim, like Diogenes to the monarch, "Stand on one side, that I may see my child." My readers no doubt may laugh at my folly, and I have sometimes myself thought we were wrong; and yet I envy not those incapable of being carried away by their feelings, to perform a virtuous though imprudent action, and look upon money in some cases as mere dross; it is quite true they may often and often regret their sacrifices, but still I do pity those who could be incapable of making the sacrifice.

In my youth, at the university, there was a professor who was looked down upon by most of the others because he often spoke contemptuously of learning, though he himself was a profound scholar. He died young, and society as well as the college sustained a great loss by his death, which occurred from his seeing a poor child at the window of a house in flames, and its mother in a state of distraction gazing up at it. A professor, standing by, said, In another instant that house will fall; he rushed in, seized the child, and placed him in his mother's arms, but, as he did so, a beam fell upon him, and so seriously injured him, that he died in a few days afterwards. The doctor who attended him was the very professor who had made the observation. "Oh, my friend," said he, "I warned you how it would be." "Very true," replied he, "and now, perhaps, if it were to be done over again, I should hesitate; but still, the man who would not risk his life for another is not worthy to live." The tutors lectured the young men, and pointed out the folly of acting without due reflection; but we, who had been filled with admiration at the noble act of heroism, were rather disappointed to hear that our favourite admitted if it was to be done again he might have hesitated. I am now old, I still admire his action, but I admire still more the noble frankness with which, on his death bed, he acknowledged that his virtuous enthusiasm was more the result of feeling than thought. He had been a professor of history, and his lectures were always most amusing and instructive; but he was sometimes accused of being drawn away by his feelings, and not always impartial. A squib once appeared against him with this accusation, and one of the students maliciously placed it on his desk. "I am well aware of my failing," said he, smiling; "but, believe me, no man is fit to lecture upon history, or worthy to study it, if he can coldly reason on all the stormy events that take place, and read without horror the actions of a Nero, or not kindle with delight at the noble character of an Antoninus. I am a man, gentlemen, and history, which it is my province to lecture

upon, is the story of my fellows and of yours. Let superior beings regard the events that take place in the world as if they were examining an ant-hill. We, as men, cannot look with indifference on that which has affected our fellow men. There are epochs of history in which virtue, faith, and even Providence itself, appear to have abandoned the world. He who can think of them without deep and solemn feeling, is but a mere philosopher." The remembrance of my old friend and his reasoning probably came into my mind during my walk of proud satisfaction, and I felt that if Elizabeth had acted differently she would have been merely a stoic.

The paper was only just destroyed when Triedelben returned, looking just as usual. Elizabeth put her feet on the fragments to prevent his seeing them. The Baron was still seated, struggling with his contending emotions; Triedelben looked hard at him, and he returned his gaze, but said, "I wish we could be friends:" he made no answer, and the Baron went on, "you say you know I was not always what I am now. It is true. In my youth, all I held dear was taken from me, and my mind was soured when my hopes of happiness were crushed. My brother—are you aware that he"—Triedelben nodded, and he continued—"he blasted all my hopes, and hatred the most deep and bitter took possession of me; the heart and hand of her I adored was snatched from me. I see, sir, you also know this part of my history." "Yes," said Triedelben, "but your brother was not to blame." "I know it now, but I did not then." "You did afterwards." "Yes, but too late, too late; for I already hated him." "It is never too late to repent of hating,—and why did you pursue him with such rancour?" "Because he treated me with contempt; though I confess I provoked him to it." Triedelben seemed trying to recollect something, and, after a moment's pause, said, "Your nephew never injured you." A dark cloud came over his face. "How could I help being offended at his marriage? One circumstance alone was calculated to render it odious to me, for I heard that his wife was engaged to a young man she loved, but that she rejected him for Wahlen, who, she thought, was rich. Can you wonder, therefore, that I should desire to punish such falseness? But now," he said, standing up and approaching Elizabeth, whom he embraced, "I am convinced, my daughter, that you are noble and generous: and when you tore up that paper you gained the heart of an uncle who tenderly loves you."

The door at this moment opened, and Wahlen entered. He stood transfixed with surprise and joy at seeing his uncle's affectionate manner to his wife; but in a moment he went up to him, seized his hand and kissed it. The scene was infectious—Augusta and I fell on one another's necks, and afterwards Wahlen and Elizabeth. "To what do I owe this happy change?" said Wahlen. "To me," said Triedelben, drily. I perceived the pain this

proud speech inflicted, and said, "You were the origin, no doubt, but the Baron's good feelings accomplished the rest." "No," said Triedelben, still more sternly, "you owe it to me, and the fear I have inspired." I was petrified to hear a man usually so kind and gentle speak thus, and my countenance showed the annoyance I felt; but he persevered, and seemed determined to drive the Baron to extremity. "I again repeat," said he, "you owe it to me." "Well," said the Baron, "I acknowledge you did inspire me with fear, but now," said he, turning to his nephew, "it is over. I confess to you, my son, that I robbed you of your inheritance, and I know you feel for me when I thus humbly acknowledge my guilt to you." His head dropped on Wahlen's shoulder, and he could not speak; but in a few moments he turned to Triedelben, and said, "Now, sir, I fear you no longer. My children! my children! forgive me!" They led him to a sofa, and sat by him, each holding his hand. We were all disgusted with Triedelben's harshness and grossness, and felt for the poor old man. "Any man may fall," said I, "but it is a blessed thing to rise again." "Once fallen," said Triedelben, "the stain remains." "It is better to fall than lord it over others, and condemn them so harshly." "You are right, you are right, my friend, and I heartily thank you for your reproof; but you did not check me, though, till the matter was settled." I felt I certainly had been bolder since the reconciliation of my children, and I held down my head till a second warm pressure of my good friend's hand reassured me. "You no longer fear me, then," said he, again addressing the Baron in a joking sort of way even more repulsive than his severity. The Baron looked at him with disgust, and vouchsafed no reply. "Well, then, if you do not fear me, will you try to love me?" Saying this, he drew back his sleeve, and showed the mark of a deep wound just above his wrist. "Recognize your old friend, Wahlen, and assure yourself I love you as warmly as ever." The Baron threw himself into his arms. "Good heavens!" cried he, "is it possible? Do I again see you, Ludwig, after thirty years? Oh, Ludwig! why did you quit me? you who were my guardian angel. Had you remained you might have saved me." Tears dropped from Triedelben's eyes; in vain he tried to hide them. At last he said, "I did not desert you till you were unworthy of me." "I swear," said he, "by the sacred ties of friendship, I did not fall till you quitted me. When the object of my love was taken from me, I bore it; but when I lost my friend, I lost all. Pride and despair overcame me. Oh, Ludwig! you never loved; you could not enter into the fatal passion. Had you been by me I should not have forgot myself. I would never have deserted you on the brink of the precipice; I would have upheld you. In such a case a friend is all in all. Why, why did you desert me?" "Because I thought you unworthy." "No, no, I was not at that moment; but when

you were gone I despaired ; I was crushed ; I no longer respected myself, and I became a prey to hatred, revenge, and every other deadly passion. If you had loaded me with the most bitter reproaches, you still might have saved me ; but your cold-blooded desertion drove me beside myself." Triedelben covered his face with his hands, and said, "You are right ; I was proud, sinful, and fancied I loved virtue better than my friend ; I was what, alas ! I am even now—an enthusiast who forgets the nature of man, seeking after perfection. Oh, Wahlen ! I am not yet corrected ; I am the same Ludwig, who always desired to govern and rule every body : and what misplaced sacrifices has it led me into ? Ah ! my friend, during these thirty years my heart has still bled ; and how often did I long to return to you ! Can you forgive me, and love me, after all I have made you suffer ? I thought I should not feel for you when I resolved to humble you. Your secret cost me enormous sums, for I determined to spare nothing to force you to make restitution ; but when I saw you trembling and confounded before me, my heart was ready to burst. I longed to embrace you as in the days of our youth, but my harsh nature got the better of me ; he trembles before a man and a stranger, thought I, he who once would have faced any thing but crime, I could not stand it, and was forced to retire ; nor should I have ever again seen you, but for that sweet angel's conduct ; and when I saw your heart softened I felt I still had a friend, and was no longer alone in the world." "And I," said the Baron, "have found again the happy path of virtue, and the friend of my youth. But you do regret that you abandoned me ?" "Yes, indeed, and I shall do so all my life, and never, I trust, forget the lesson. I have always been looking out for perfection in others, when I had only to examine my own heart to see how full it was of defects."

The friends appeared to forget they were not alone till Wahlen addressed them, after which they walked off arm in arm together. "It seems," said my son, "that we have made another interesting discovery. This Ludwig is, I doubt not, my uncle, the brother of my mother, whom I told you of as a curious rich old bachelor. I thought he hated me because my father had married his sister, and he had asked her to be the wife of a friend of his own. It seems clear that man was my uncle. I remember now my father told me they had fought, and that he had wounded him ; he never liked him, and always thought him a mad enthusiast, wanting to govern everybody, but my mother told me he was really a kind and excellent man." Soon after the friends returned, looking quite happy, and the Baron taking Triedelben by the hand, said, "Dear friend, I need not tell you to love your nephew and niece." "No," said Triedelben, "that is indeed unnecessary. You know now, my dear youth, that I am your mother's brother. I received the letter you wrote to me announci-

your marriage, and, as I knew the terms you and your uncle were upon, I was astonished you should think of uniting yourself to a poor country parson's daughter; I determined, therefore, to make your acquaintance and hers, without discovering myself to you, and I had the delight of finding what is so rare and beautiful a sight, a family content with what they had, virtuous and happy. I was deeply interested in you, my good vicar, but the temptation to fall into my old domineering ways was too strong for me; and whilst I was trying to give a lesson to this young man, a villain stepped in and robbed this tender and excellent mother of her son, whilst Elizabeth, without my aid, effected her husband's reformation." This part of the discourse puzzled Wahlen till we reminded him of Charles's arrest, when Triedelben could not resist a small portion of the lecture he had designed him. "You have now found out," added he, "my circumstances; it would be ridiculous any longer to conceal them, though I had half a mind, till your uncle begged me not, to give way to my old faults. I thank God I have again found the friend of my youth, and that together we may assist in promoting the happiness of those so justly dear to us. Dear Charles will at any rate see a great deal of the world, which will do him no harm, and he will enjoy his home doubly afterwards. I will at once go to Berlin, and bring you back Mina, and then my old friend I am yours for life." The Baron soon after quitted the room, and he gave us as much of his early history as he thought it well for us to know. He had ardently desired that his sister should marry his friend, not being aware she was already secretly attached to Wahlen's father, he was furious on discovering it, and a duel took place in which he was wounded; the lovers married, the Baron accused his friend of deceiving him, and vowed against his brother the most bitter and savage vengeance. His imprecations filled Ludwig with horror, so that he determined to quit the country, and sailed for India, where he remained for some years and made an immense fortune; trusting on his return to find that time had softened down the animosity of his friend, but, on enquiry, he was told his sister and her husband were both dead, and that the Baron had never ceased to pursue them with implacable rancour; that he had married, and the great object of his life was to heap up wealth for his only son, and ruin his nephew. His brother had always abstained from entering into collision with him, and he had been assisted by a rascally attorney in forging a will, in which his brother had been entirely cut out and all his father's property settled upon him. His first punishment was the death of his son, but remorse and the terrors of conscience were even more dreadful to him; he tried to appease these feelings by adopting his nephew, and was just about to invest him with his father's patrimony, when his letter, announcing his intended marriage, made him perfectly furious. Ludwig, with great trouble and

expense, found out the attorney, and forced a confession from him, waiting only his opportunity to confront the Baron, and force him to make restitution. The Baron's unexpected visit produced the result we have seen. Elizabeth was exceedingly moved, and when his recital ended she said, "I wish you had shown a little more consideration to the friend of your youth." "No, no," said Triedelben, "it is our duty to alarm a hardened sinner, even though he may be a friend." "You would not have spoken so to a dying man," argued she, "and who could assure you that the man whose soul you were harrowing in that way might be alive to-morrow?" "True, true; you are an excellent girl; and there is but one truth I shall now ever tell without reserve, and that is, that I love you and respect you with all my heart."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MINA'S LETTERS.

A day or two after we returned home, and Ludwig went to Berlin. Our hearts were now thoroughly opened to all the luxury of hope, despair having vanished like the dark clouds of a summer's morn. Augusta and I, the evening of our return, had taken out my atlas, and were contemplating a map of the world. She looked up cheerfully and said, "India is not so very, very distant." I shook my head, and traced with my finger the fearful route round Europe and Africa, stopping at Stadt. I said, "it is an awful voyage." "Why should they not go by land?" said she; "it is far shorter, and they would escape the perils of the sea." "Ah!" said I, "the people whose country they pass through are more to be dreaded than the sea. I fear they may well say the same of us, for we introduced slavery, drunkenness, and every other vice amongst them. It is indeed sad to think that the worst enemy to man is his fellow man. Alas! alas! how is our short sojourn here, instead of being ameliorated and made happy, constantly disturbed and rendered wretched by our own species. Earthquakes, conflagrations, and contagious diseases are sometimes sent as a scourge by the Almighty; but the most cruel of all disorders are those which are brought upon man by his fellows. Heaven's scourges are but rare, but man never ceases to spread around him desolation and death." "Oh, but," said my wife, "God has spared him, and He will still guard and protect my boy." "No doubt, no doubt," said I, "and however inhospitable the clime, He can still raise him up friends, for there are God-fearing and kind people to be met with in every clime. The gracious God compensates to his people in every trial. All is under his rule and governance in India, in Africa, as well as at home." "Do you really think so?" said she; "d-

you tell me he may meet kind and loving hearts there? Then I will console myself; I will dwell on the idea with courage; I will again, with peace and confidence, commit him to my heavenly Father's care." She imagined, poor dear soul, that it was this conversation which made her happy. I knew, though I did not say so, that her spirits and strength had acquired an impetus by the delight she experienced in the new aspect of our daughter's affair, which cheered her up, and made her doubly hopeful for her son. "He will come back," said she, "I feel sure of it; he will be blessed, like Elizabeth, and we shall together render thanks to our God for all the mercies he has vouchsafed to us." We determined, therefore, to keep up our spirits, and with patience and hope to await events as they should develop themselves, without uselessly brooding over the past or fretting about the future.

A few days after we received from Elizabeth a budget of Mina's letters, but it was too late for us to arrest the evil we wished to avert. I will give extracts of them, which will best explain the painful circumstances.

"I am now, dear Elizabeth, fully settled in the great world, as you are pleased to call my present abode, and I am quite as much at my ease as if I had passed my whole life here. It is exactly what I expected, neither more nor less. What is called the great world is but a mere illusion—awful at a distance, insignificant when one is used to it. Great! I can see nothing great in it, but a mere mass of folly, disgust, and ennui. No doubt, to those who have always lived in seclusion, the grandeur and splendour of the world does at first dazzle and astonish, but when once closely observed it loses all its charms. A thousand petty details and flaws spoil all, like the fine heroes in history, who are admired because so very little is known of them. True greatness is only to be found in real unselfish friendship and virtue. I amuse myself, and that is the chief delight which this great world affords me. My poor dear father used to say, you know nothing of the world. What a bugbear this knowledge of the world really is. Some honest folks I know do go about in an easy kind of way all their lives, never observing or reflecting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, like mere machines. But I trust I make use of my eyes; and I am sure just the same things occur in this world of fashion as in the quiet little world we were brought up in. Men and women are essentially the same everywhere; they have the same passions and feelings, and the same motives to guide them; so the knowledge of the world, after all, is not so important as the knowledge of ourselves. We can all comment on the faults we see in others, and decide how they ought to have acted; but it is not so easy to act up to principle, even when the monitor within plainly points out the way. I am, therefore, much less afraid of being led astray by others, than of being

"deceived by my own heart. When others entice us we ourselves
 "are more than half willing, and already corrupt. However, dear
 "sister, I shall from time to time give you a candid and full
 "report of myself, and you need not feel the least uneasy. Your
 "last affectionate letter touched me deeply, but I laughed at
 "your fears, for the picture you drew of a man of the world is so
 "very different to the reality, the only resemblance being the
 "presumption and self-esteem, which of itself would be quite a suf-
 "ficient safeguard to me. You beg I will give you a particular
 "account of my reception: the Count was alone, he received me
 "with great politeness and kindness, though he stared at me a
 "little unpleasantly. 'Your recommendations are admirable,' said
 "he; 'you look very young, but it will make you all the fitter to
 "be the companion of my children. I hear you are an admirable
 "English scholar, and as I purpose some day going to that coun-
 "try, I wish them to acquire the language. I am told you have
 "lived in great retirement, and no doubt our mode of life will at
 "first seem strange to you; but you will soon get used to it, and
 "learn the little usages of the world, which in a few words are,
 "to please and be pleased.' He expressed all this in a most bland,
 "agreeable manner, not noticing my timidity, or that I kept
 "my eyes fixed on the ground, without answering. He passed
 "some unmeaning compliments on my appearance, and then
 "brought in his children to me, two sweet little girls of six and
 "seven years of age. The Countess addressed me almost in the
 "same terms, and I was at once considered a member of the
 "noble family, and I assure you I feel quite at my ease already.
 "I carefully observe the Countess' manners, and try to imitate
 "them. I listen with pleasure to the Countess' lively conversa-
 "tions, and try to pick up all I can to make use of when called
 "upon to amuse their guests; and on the whole I do really think
 "I contrive to pass as an agreeable and well informed person.
 "The Count is very rich, and has the handsomest house in Ber-
 "lin; his wife is thought beautiful, and would really be so if she
 "had the sweet, gentle expression of my Elizabeth. I have
 "thought her lovely when playing with her children, but in soci-
 "ety she is cold and distant, which gives her the appearance of
 "being haughty. He is thought excessively clever and entertain-
 "ing; but he puts on at times an air of irony and contempt for
 "what is sacred and serious, and even affects to be something of
 "a sceptic, though I believe he really has more right feeling than
 "he chooses to acknowledge, for I am sure he is devotedly at-
 "tached to his wife; and though he professes a perfect indiffer-
 "ence for her I have seen him half inclined to be jealous. How
 "different is his cold politeness from the happy ease and loving
 "confidence subsisting between you and Wahlen, and how fortu-
 "nate he is to have escaped the thralldom of the world for his own
 "happy little cottage where he may show his feelings without being

"ashamed of them. The Count prides himself in doing every thing by system. One day he told me the whole art of society was never to constrain any one, or suffer any interference. He had once been in England, and has what is called an Anglo mania. He speaks the language badly, but takes great pains; and affects the English dress and mode of living, always receiving every traveller of that nation. When first I made up my mind to be a governess my great fear was that I should be treated with hauteur and looked down upon, but hitherto it has been quite the contrary, the greatest politeness and consideration; and I could not set it down to any merit on my part, because it commenced from the moment I entered the house, and must therefore be the spontaneous effusion of their natural kindness and good nature. I always have my seat in their handsome equipage, and make one in their parties, being received as one of the family; the odd thing is, it all seems quite natural to me and suited to my taste, notwithstanding all our philosophers, from Diogenes to Charles inclusive. Like the other ladies, I have my little court of flatterers. You would say, my Elizabeth, that I not only have recovered my good looks, but am now rather distingué in my appearance. The Count is always most attentive to me. Do not be alarmed, Madame is almost always present, and much amused at my mode of taking his compliments. I amuse myself immensely in watching the manners of those I am thrown amongst, and adapting myself to their ways; some are serious, some are witty; I argue with some, and laugh with others; but I never can play sentiment, it is too sacred a subject, and my feelings would not be understood. I only distract my thoughts, which wander so often towards home even in the midst of their frivolous conversations, and long for the happy hours to return which we passed together when our hearts and thoughts were so fully known and understood by each other. But one must make the best of one's situation, and certainly even here I meet with kind and agreeable persons, full of information and instruction, whose conversation is very agreeable to me, though there is no real heart in it; and if it were not for the excitement of play I do not know what half the people would do. The little sketch I send you will give you some idea of me; they always introduce me as Mademoiselle Bonnerot, instead of my own German name; but in the family I am called always Mademoiselle Mina."

In another letter she said—"Oh! my dear sister, how often do I think of you, your dear husband and child; how sweet in every respect is your mode of existence; wherever you turn your eyes some beloved object meets you. The name of true friendship and real attachment is here unknown. I have met but one gentleman, an Englishman named Lisborne, who seems to have any notion of what these feelings really mean. He is but

"lately come, and when I was first introduced to him, in answer to the Count's declaration that I was almost an English woman, he very politely addressed me in English, and then told me I really might pass for one. He continued to converse with me for some time, apparently with great pleasure, probably because it was agreeable to hear his own tongue,—but, no, no, I will not hide it from you, though I have tried to deceive myself, but will frankly own that Monsieur Lisborne does seek my society and find me agreeable, and as he often talks German with me, it cannot be altogether for that. I often see him, too, gazing at me, and following me about with his eyes, and seeking every opportunity to engage my attention; and I confess I am weak enough to feel my vanity flattered, though it is only my vanity, nothing more. He is exceedingly agreeable, and has travelled much, without losing the peculiarity of his nation; and it is easy to see he has always lived in good company, and his appearance is striking and noble. He is considered clever, well informed, and is much sought after. I suspect he attaches a little too much importance himself to the opinions of others, though he has evidently a just appreciation of all that is noble and refined; but he has lost his freshness, for I have often seen him almost drawn on by enthusiasm and generous impulse, and then suddenly checked by the fear of ridicule."

In another letter she says—"Count Herbouurg is always drawing me into arguments upon the moral sentiments—virtue, benevolence, and the happiness they confer. I unguardedly said yesterday, to Monsieur Lisborne, that there was an exquisite pleasure in suffering for others; they both laughed outright, and the Count said, 'Like all enthusiasts, you exaggerate. I grant there are some passions and *emotions* of the mind which may be exciting and amusing.' 'Amusing!' said I, 'what an expression.' 'Well, absorbing, if you like it better; but to call such feelings happiness is so absurd, that I wonder how you, with your strong sense, can attempt to make such an assertion.' Oh! my Elizabeth, how I thought at that moment of all you and I had undergone for each other, how we had embraced one another, our hearts all the while breaking, and yet what a sublime feeling of reciprocal love and devotion sustained and guided us, and how sweet and delightful did we find even the hours of anguish which we had endured. The thought recalled all our happy, childish days, and I became quite overpowered; my eyes filled with tears, but I hastily concealed them, feeling it would be sacrilege to explain their cause. The Count rallied me on not being able to maintain my argument, and Lisborne made an effort to defend me by a set of clever, absurd sophisms, which made the Count laugh still more, and afforded me time to recover myself. 'I assure you, gentlemen,' said I, 'I mean what I say, and I ask you if you never felt at the same moment

"contending feelings of happiness and pain? for instance, a dear friend, whom one might comfort by sympathy, though totally unable to aid him in any other way, though capable of any sacrifice if it would but avail." Lisborne sighed, his countenance assumed the sad and serious aspect I had before remarked when struggling to hide what he felt; the Count's merriment increased, and he once proceeded to some coarse joking on the subject, which I sharply and severely took up; he apologised immediately, and turned the conversation. Lisborne spoke of the abuse of wealth, and the true use to be made of money, with the happiness it might confer; and I seized the opportunity of letting the Count know my mind on many subjects which had very frequently disturbed me; he listened most amiably, and even professed to agree with me, though I am quite sure he really paid no sort of attention to what I advanced. 'Go on, I entreat you,' said Lisborne, 'you have almost converted me.' 'No,' said I, 'for if you feel that what I say is right, and yet hesitate to do it, you are only trying to find out excuses, and those who do so are sure to find plenty of very plausible ones. Now or never is the only way to think of real penitence.' Lisborne, like most Englishmen, is very rich, and was often in the habit of casting handfuls of money from his windows, but since this conversation he has told me that he makes a conscience of his expenses; and indeed many kind acts he has done have accidentally come to my knowledge. Do not say, then, dear sister, that my coming here has been useless, for who knows how many poor creatures may rejoice over this very circumstance? I feel as proud of it as if I had preached a sermon. At Eizebach I was only poor little Minette, here you see I am a philosopher and reformer. Don't laugh at me, for I maintain that I am a philosopher; surrounded by all that riches can bestow, and yet not having the slightest desire to be the follower of fashion, I could quit with pleasure these brilliant apartments, sumptuous repasts, and elegant equipages, polite and agreeable society, and return with joy to my dear father's humble home, to work hard by the solitary lamp, and enjoy his humble fare and frugal meals. You know I always maintained that one might be a philosopher without going barefoot, or drinking out of one's hand, or living in a cave. I like a cheerful, pretty house, I enjoy the conveniences of life, but I detest dissipation and ostentation, which squanders millions for the sake of being thought rich. I can fancy Charles grumbling when he reads this; and you, too, my sweet one, will perhaps call me worldly, and remind me of the precept of the ancients, under whose teaching we were brought up; but I always contended that we took our sages too literally; for instance, I always keep up a most simple and plain style of dress, which I compare to Socrates going about barefoot. Again I say, fear not, Eliza, the world has no charms for me."

In the next letter she says—"I can't quite make out the Count de Herbourg. Instead of a master I had hoped to regard him always as a friend; for the kindness, and indeed I may say respect, of his manners towards me quite justified the feeling; and the disagreeable levity which he at times showed I always attributed to the defects of his education and the society he mingles in. I could discover many essentially noble and correct principles; and he always listened with indulgence to my moral strictures. I even thought, perhaps with too much self-conceit, that I saw symptoms of reformation in him, but latterly his manner is far from satisfactory; he has assumed a tone of flattery and compliment exceedingly irksome to me—not that for one moment do I conceive he means what his silly speeches imply—but he is ennuyé, and requires some fresh excitement, and thinks it agreeable to amuse himself with a young girl, always more or less in his company. At times he has addressed me with a sort of tenderness most offensive to me, and I hardly knew how to act. At first I pretended not to notice it; afterwards I assumed a cold, dignified, and serious air, which you could not have thought your Mina capable of. I then said, 'Do you suppose, sir, that I can feel flattered by such speeches, which are, in fact, the deepest mortification to me?' He laughed, and said, 'At any rate you can't prevent my thinking you a most lovely and attractive woman.' 'Your conversation, sir, most painfully recalls my dependant position.' 'On my word,' said he, 'you wrong me; you never shall be dependant in my house; and I think I have always treated you with the consideration and respect with which you inspire me. How then can you be offended with me? I swear I meant not to annoy you.' I took him at his word, and changed the conversation; but he is always attempting to renew it, and I can only pretend to regard his disagreeable compliments as pleasantries. The Countess cannot help perceiving his folly, and encourages me in the manner in which I take it. She pretends to laugh, too, and occasionally joins me in attacking him, and keeping up a kind of lively repartee, which makes him positively cross. Sometimes he joins in the laugh, though in a constrained manner; and I hope I have adopted the wisest course with him. I wish I had as little trouble in putting off Lisborne's attentions, for he is really attached to me; and though it is quite impossible that I can ever return his affection, yet he interests me because he has all the noble qualities of truth and sincerity, and never intrudes his feelings upon me; but his gentle and kind manner, his eyes always fixed upon me, and the tender tone of his voice, all unmistakably show his love; he seeks to gain my confidence, is most respectful, and always shows the most refined delicacy and sensibility. In fact, did I not feel his happiness was compromised, such homage would be most charming and delightful

"to me; but I am not such a vile coquette as to trifle with him.
 "On our first acquaintance he treated me with the marked gal-
 "lantry which the young men of fashion assume, paying me com-
 "pliments on my figure, appearance, &c. &c., and though it was
 "all said with great delicacy, yet nothing can be so really dis-
 "agreeable to a woman of sensibility as to hear her looks com-
 "mented upon, or to be told she is pretty; it embarrasses her,
 "and she does not know what to answer: if she seems to agree,
 "she is conceited; if she tries to deny it, it is false modesty; but
 "the countenance and the expression of it is of more value than
 "any speeches. I treated all his compliments as I had done
 "those of the Count, when he suddenly left them off, and be-
 "haves with the most prepossessing frankness, even to occasion-
 "ally reproving me. If I say or do what he does not like, his
 "countenance is serious, and instead of trying to attract observa-
 "tion towards me, he seeks to screen me from it. I must own,
 "dear Eliza, that though I never can return his affection, I do
 "feel flattered and pleased at being the object of attraction to
 "such a man as he is. His attachment I see daily increases,
 "and I am deeply grateful to him, but I cannot be so base as to
 "give him any hope. I can laugh at the Count, because I have
 "only a contempt for his conduct; but Lisborne is not to be tri-
 "fled with; and I am most guarded and watchful in my conduct
 "towards him, that I may feel I deserve the good opinion of such
 "a man. Oh! Elizabeth, how can women abuse the confidence
 "of their lovers and husbands, and seek to rule over them, when
 "they do possess such an inestimable treasure as the heart of a
 "confiding and good man? how can they slacken in their desire
 "to please him, or grow careless of his wishes and feelings? It
 "seems to me the origin of love is so strange, its duration so
 "uncertain, that every woman should make it the object of her
 "life to acquire those virtues and agreeable qualities which not
 "only justify the choice of her husband, but are capable of re-
 "taining his affection and promoting his happiness and honour.
 "She who seeks unduly to govern her husband, humiliates him
 "and abases herself. Pardon my running on in this way. In
 "thinking of you I have before me a model of that which every
 "one should aim at. As for me, though Lisborne never can be
 "to me any thing more than a friend, yet, since I have perceived
 "his devotion to me, I have felt ennobled by it. I think I am
 "more modest, more firm, energetic, and more indulgent to
 "others than I used to be. I retire more into myself, and de-
 "pise that applause which I used to court and delight in."
 "In another letter she says—"You unjustly accuse me, dear,
 "of an ironical contempt for Socrates and our old philosophers,
 "because I compare my simplicity of dress to their going bare-
 "footed. You call my conduct to Count Herbourg silly and
 "coquettish, and you say I only speak with respect of Lisborne

"because I am attracted by him, because he is in love with me,
 "and because he is rich and handsome, and that all this makes
 "you very uneasy. Now, my dear sister, pray be easy, and
 "cease your fears; your tender solicitude compels me to open the
 "secret of my heart to you, the only one I ever concealed from
 "you. Eliza, I do love, but it is not this English gentleman.
 "Whilst you were trying to combat what you thought my doubts
 "as to the immortality of the soul, I was struggling against an
 "unhappy attachment which I neither could nor would reveal to
 "you. On that new year's eve, when I fainted in Charles's arms,
 "it was because all hope had deserted me, and that the feelings
 "I entertained were now criminal, as the object of my affections
 "was to be my sister's husband. I was able, dearest sister, to
 "hide from you the cause of my sufferings, but you know how
 "nearly I sunk under it. After this, Eliza, I beheld at my feet
 "the man for whom I suffered so much, and for one instant I
 "fancied I might be happy, and that he desired to pledge his
 "faith to me; but I triumphed over the momentary weakness,
 "for I could not be so base as to owe to pity that which should
 "spring from affection and spontaneous esteem. I felt, too, that
 "I had betrayed my secret, and I tore myself away, preferring
 "a life of wretchedness and solitariness to taking advantage of a
 "compassion which would always cover me with shame and confusion.
 "I still love him, Elizabeth; I am still forlorn and
 "unhappy, and never, never will my sentiments towards him
 "change: and now, after this avowal, you will not again charge
 "me with a secret preference for Lisborne. What you think the
 "result of levity and folly in my letters, is but the effect of the
 "life I lead. It is impossible here to carry out the philosophic
 "reasonings of Charles, to look upon this life as a state of martyrdom
 "and privation; nor can I, my sweet one, as you do, regard it as the eve
 "of a grand festival, in which one has nothing to do but prepare for the
 "morrow. Without dwelling on the past, I must enjoy time as it passes.
 "Time was when I was perfectly happy in my youth, my joyous spirits, my innocent sports,
 "and the tender affection of my parents and brothers and sisters; then
 "your friendship was the great happiness and charm of my existence; and I do
 "believe it is the will of Providence we should thus enjoy life as it goes.
 "God surrounds us with so much to make us happy—nature is so lovely, so rich, so grand—
 "we have the innate desire to enjoy and relish all these things—our minds
 "are capable of entering into friendships, and susceptible of constant improvement,
 "that it must be our own faults if we are cold and dissatisfied. I have long experienced a
 "placid content, and been enabled to derive my satisfaction from the contemplation
 "of my Heavenly Father's goodness, and I have fought successfully against
 "permitting my mind to dwell upon disappointment or feeding itself upon a hopeless attachment.

"ment, though I know well it never can cease to exist. I should account myself most ungrateful if I gave way to inertness and despondency, instead of thankfully receiving the comforts and blessings by which I am surrounded."

In her next letter she said—"We are about to pass six weeks at a country seat of the Count's, in Silesia. I am told it is a little paradise; and the Count pretends he has arranged the expedition solely for my gratification. 'You need no longer sigh,' said he, 'for the song of the nightingale, for the woods are full of them, and I hope for once to receive thanks from your cold, ungrateful heart, which finds pleasure in nothing but nightingales.' The Countess laughed, and said the excursion was indeed solely for my pleasure, as climbing mountains had no attractions for her, as you merely cut your feet to pieces with the flints, and as for the woods they were so dark and dismal you could not see a yard before you, were stifled for want of air, and in constant terror of robbers. The Count defended the country with vivacity, especially his own place, which he described as a lovely spot in a sweet valley, surrounded by mountains. 'You will have no need either to climb rocks or penetrate woods, if you do not like it,' said he. 'Mademoiselle Mina, the children and I can take our excursions together.' I took no notice of this speech, but simply expressed my thanks for their kindness in considering my tastes, and I do look forward with much pleasure to the excursion, for my heart rebounds with delight at the thoughts of again enjoying the beauties of nature. Nothing can be kinder than they are; all my favorite books are to be taken, and the little femme de chambre who waits on me and the children. I told the Countess I felt sure the change would be beneficial to the children, and she is now quite pleased to go, whilst the dear little pets jump about for joy at the anticipation. Lisborne alone is melancholy and depressed; he cannot bear our going; and since the plan was settled he has been absent, reserved, and even disagreeable; and he who has always expressed such intense admiration for the pleasures of the country, now speaks with contempt and ridicule of them. 'You who pretend to be such an admirer of the ancients,' said he, 'when do you ever find any of them choosing to bury themselves there? they all dwelt amongst men, and even your divine Socrates says, there is nothing to be learned from trees and fields.' 'What in the world can the ancients have to do with the matter?' said I. I thought it was a quiet satire upon my professed admiration of the old philosophers, but his manner soon convinced me he really did dislike our going, and that it had completely disturbed his temper. I have now to go and put up my things, but will continue my letter at the first place we stop at, and I am sure you will like to think of your Mina again enjoying the delight of fresh country air."

In her next she says—"Before I describe my journey I must tell you that, while completing my arrangements in my own boudoir, Lisbonne was announced to me. He entered with an air of great depression, which I pretended not to observe, and said, laughing, 'Oh, I did not think you would be so envious of my happiness, but you must abridge your adieux, for'——" 'I am not envious,' said he sadly; 'no one can desire your happiness more ardently than I do, but'—he stopped, and looked nervously round him, and then said, 'I wish, Mina, to give you one word of warning, of advice: it is a subject of great delicacy, but, there are dangers to be apprehended in the country—nightingales are charming—but'——" 'What can you possibly mean, sir?' He was silent for a few moments, and then said, in a low voice, 'It is right for you to know it, and yet how can I tell you?' 'Sir, I do not see why any thing you can say should offend: if you have doubts on the subject you should not have commenced it.' Was I not right, Elizabeth, to say this? 'Then I will hesitate no longer,' said he, in almost a whisper, and looking down on the ground; 'Count Herbourg loves you,—you treat his feelings with ridicule, but it only increases them, and makes them more dangerous.' His voice grew every moment more animated, loud, and vehement, at last he stopped short, and was again much embarrassed. 'Sir,' said I, with affected ease, 'pray do not be uneasy; rely upon it there is not the slightest occasion; but I must request you to abstain mentioning such subjects to me.' He went on, however, though evidently more and more distressed: 'this voyage you know is undertaken with the sole object of giving you pleasure, and he hopes by constant attention, and being always with you, to effect his object.' He paused, and I knew not what to say. He repeated, 'I am quite convinced it is a plan on his part to effect your destruction.' His look, manner, and subject were altogether so utterly distressing to me, that I felt humbled and degraded before him, and said, 'Permit me, sir, to ask what grounds you have for this extraordinary disclosure?' I looked hard at him, and his confusion increased; he stammered out something which was no answer to my question. I suspected something wrong, and showed him I did so. 'Chance,' said he, 'and some few words the Count let drop awakened my suspicions.' 'Suspicion, sir! was it mere suspicion that could justify such a liberty?' 'Oh, charming Mina!' said he, 'will you compel me to open my mind, and tell you the secret of my heart, which circumstances made me wish for a time to hide from you till I felt myself more worthy of your confidence, and of a reciprocal feeling from you? I can no longer conceal my pure, my earnest love; it was that which enlightened me, as to the sentiments I perceived in the Count. I know well your principles of rectitude and honour, but it was insupportable and

" odious to me to think for one moment of your being placed in
 " a position to shock your delicacy, that is the reason why I left
 " no means untried to prevail upon you to give up this excursion,
 " and when I perceived that all I said was in vain, the pain of
 " being separated from you, and my intense anxiety about you,
 " have forced me to speak as I have done. Answer me not, I
 " beg of you,—I could not endure a refusal,—and yet, as yet, I
 " dare not press you to give me your hand.' 'Sir,' said I, with
 " decision, and even with harshness, 'the Count Herbourg's con-
 " duct has always appeared to me that of innocent pleasantries,
 " and consequently I have behaved to him with respect and con-
 " fidence. If you are not deceived I should look upon him as the
 " most despicable of men. As to the rest, sir, any feeling of pre-
 " ference I may have the misfortune to have inspired you with,
 " can only be excessively painful to me, for I have no heart to
 " give.' 'What!' said he, in a voice of surprise and sorrow, 'you
 " are already engaged?' He was silent for a moment or two, and
 " then added, 'may I presume to ask if'——'ask nothing, sir.
 " You know my secret, and I esteem you too much to think you
 " will betray it.' He bowed profoundly, respectfully kissed my
 " hand, and said, 'What a price have I paid for my anxious
 " care.' He remained some moments greatly agitated, and then
 " resuming almost his usual tone, he said, 'I trust you mean to
 " join the general party again this evening, that you may receive
 " the farewell of a—sincere friend.' When he quitted the room I
 " felt greatly displeased with him, and most exceedingly annoyed.
 " His proposal, no doubt, was made with great delicacy, but
 " what an extraordinary moment to choose for it. My own avowal
 " was quite unpremeditated, and escaped me from a pure desire
 " to crush his hopes at once. I knew not what he might think of
 " me, but his manner in quitting me, and the kind smile with
 " which he afterwards bid me adieu, pleased me, and I did not
 " feel the slightest alarm regarding the Count, only determining
 " to be more prudent and circumspect than ever, and never to
 " join in any excursions in which the Countess was not of the
 " party. The next morning we departed, and Lisborne's hints
 " opened my eyes to many things I had not observed before. I
 " cannot tell you, my Elizabeth, the contempt I feel for this man,
 " who can act so unworthily to the guardian of his children, and
 " a young person under his protection. I accordingly treated him
 " with a coolness bordering on scorn; and all pleasure in this
 " sweet spot is taken from me, the poison of the asp lurks in every
 " path, and yet it is even more lovely than I expected. I never
 " stir but with my little pupils, and I have lately seen much more
 " of the Countess, who wins more on my regard the more I know
 " her. Under her cold frivolous manner there is real kindness of
 " heart and excellence, with true affection for those whom she
 " takes an interest in. Her really fine mind is obscured and lost

"in the whirl of fashion. I feel sure she never really understood me till now; and how could she, when before her I was always engaged in a kind of war of words with gentlemen, bantering with her husband, or defending myself against his gallantries? You will wonder, perhaps, how this better understanding was brought about. Chance effected it. The children and I were one day strolling in a coppice near the house, one searching for flowers, the other hunting butterflies, and I seated with my book under a tree, when the Count came up and began some of his usual folly, to which I replied in such a manner as to make him feel very foolish. In a moment after the Countess joined us, and I plainly saw by her manner, her blushes, and, above all, her extreme kindness, that she had witnessed what occurred. Her former cold politeness is now changed into perfect cordiality, and she always seeks my company. I used to fancy she cared nothing for her husband's levity of conduct, but I now plainly see that, though proud, she is full of feeling. We neither of us ever alluded to the subject; but I do believe that before she used to think I did not try to discourage the Count. I have left nothing undone to remove the impression, and I grieve over the annoyance I must have occasioned her, and most earnestly desire by every means in my power to render happy this sweet woman. I study her tastes and disposition, and, now the veil of dissipation and pride is removed, I find a warm and kind heart, really attached to her husband, to whom she has taken great pains to reconcile me, and is always saying something in his praise. She has more than once told me he has no fault but a little levity of character; but I cannot help thinking it must be something more than mere levity to make a man forget himself as he does. He at first begun to joke us upon our sudden friendship, calling us the inseparables; he soon wanted us to go back to Berlin, and when the Countess objected started by himself, so we are now alone, and our hearts are daily more drawn towards each other. She delights in the country, and with her sweet children and her friend—for I rejoice in the name—we are so perfectly happy that we all dread the thoughts of leaving it."

The next letter was from Berlin. "We have," said she, "been back a week; the Countess takes the greatest interest in the education of her children, and constantly makes little excursions with us. I have seen Lisborne again with pleasure, and he met me as an old friend. I am perfectly happy and comfortable, and delighted to think my letters amuse you. My journey was indeed delightful. I know no greater pleasure than that of travelling, except such a peaceful and happy home as yours is. Lisborne has lent me several books of travels, and he has himself been nearly all over Europe. He describes every thing so well, that he makes it doubly interesting. Poor Lis-

"borne! you do not half appreciate him; he is indeed truly kind. One morning very early I was sitting in my study in my negligé, when I heard a low tap at my door, and before I had time to say come in, he entered, in travelling costume. I pointed to a chair, and threw a shawl over me. I was a little annoyed at his thus thrusting himself into my private apartment, especially as at that hour I was alone. He seemed to guess my thoughts, and frankly said, 'I expected to find you disengaged, but I am just going off to see a very charming and dear relative, Lady Gover. Before my departure I wished to speak to you on a subject which weighs upon my mind: you told me you had an attachment, Mina!' I tried to interrupt him, but he continued in the same tone, 'I am aware I have no right to your confidence, but permit me at least to ask you why this attachment is not happy? You know my feelings towards you, and I am well convinced they are unchangeable, but I do not hope to find my attachment returned; but you will at least permit me to be your friend, your brother.' He took my hand, and respectfully kissed it. 'When you said you had no heart to give, it was with an expression of sadness which proved you were not happy. Why is it so? I am rich far beyond my wishes; to make you happy would be the sweetest pleasure I could know. I have powerful friends in England and at Hanover; as you are a native of that country, of which my king is the sovereign, I may be able to remove the obstacle. I entreat you to tell me the cause of your unhappiness. Why in this house you occupy a subordinate position unworthy of you. Let me make you happy; confer this boon upon me.' My eyes filled with tears, and flowed in torrents. At that moment, could he have accomplished it, happiness would have been mine; but, alas! it was all in vain. 'Generous, excellent man,' said I, 'it is beyond any one's power to help me.' He pressed me much to reveal the secret cause of my grief. Oh, my Elizabeth! I could not tell him I love without any return. At last he seemed to understand that it was a secret I did not wish to disclose. He gazed at me in silence, and at last said, 'Have you told me true? do you really love another?' 'Yes, yes,' said I, 'it is too true.' He looked down, sighed deeply, and turned the conversation, not again referring to his generous offers; but he spoke much of his cousin, and her warm, enthusiastic character, though she was a little too apt to be led away by feeling; he had persuaded her to come to Berlin for some time, as she was in low spirits. 'She will not, I fear, enter into society,' said he, 'but I do flatter myself I may count upon the sympathy of one kind friend at least.' I am all curiosity to see this interesting woman. She is travelling in the hope of overcoming some unhappy attachment. Ah! Elizabeth, how I wish I could travel. On leaving me I bade

"him adieu with deep emotion. May God protect and reward him! He is really as much to be pitied and as unhappy as I am. But, oh! what noble strength of mind and generosity."

In the next letter she says—"So, our beloved Charles has quitted us. I have just received a letter from Annette, with the full details, and also my poor mother's sad letter from Stadt. Oh! Elizabeth, and is he really gone? the hope, the joy of the house. I hate to see any one depart; I always feel as if I were a poor swallow in a cage, moaning over the loss of his friends, and listening to their cheerful notes of preparation, and unable, alas! to fly with them. I follow poor dear Charles in imagination. My heart bleeds to think of the sorrow of home; and I am much deceived if he is not greatly distressed, and does not take with him the image of his Juliet."

Not long after this another letter arrived, in which she said,—
 "Dear Elizabeth, it is impossible I can continue here; one cannot remain with those who do not love one, and more especially when they once seemed to do so. The Countess, indeed, tells me that she feels the same for me that she used to do, but her manner is so distrustful, so distant, and solemn, that her positive hatred would leave me more at ease than her stiffness, and scrutinizing smiles, as if she watched every word I utter. Every embrace she honours me with seems to cast a still greater distance between us, in fact, we invariably avoid each other as if ashamed of our mutual falseness, and any effort at reconciliation only makes the breach still the wider, because the emotion it occasions seems on the one hand a virtuous forbearance, and on the other an avowal of wrong. How sad it is to think of the narrowness of poor human nature! I surely believe that, except in the limited circle of one's own nearest relations, where love grows naturally with our growth, and proceeds, as it were, from the mature intercourse and community of cares and interests that it is almost unknown. Friendships formed in later life are like plants sown too late, the autumnal winds, or the slightest storms, cause them to perish before they are fully blown. I quite believe that in the world it is really necessary to guard against being familiar; that frigid precept which used to shock us so in our happy home, that we ought to trust our friend as if he might one day become our enemy, was surely invented for the fashionable world, as well as those artificial forms of politeness which make friendship nothing but a mere name. Two shrubs planted side by side interlace their roots, grow together, receive the same nourishment, and appear as if they were but one, and if one should die the other perishes with it. Two large forest trees only close after the lapse of years, and when fully grown injure and destroy one another without forming any union; their branches may interlace but never their sap, and they must be separated to prosper

"Such, oh, my sister, are the true emblems of our childish affec-
 "tions, and those of more advanced life. The hearts of the
 "Countess and myself seem only to have been attracted together
 "to separate with a strange revulsion. Perhaps it may be more
 "my fault than hers. I rushed with such joy to meet her first
 "advances, and forgot the vast difference of our station and cir-
 "cumstances. I ardently desired to render this poor wife, who
 "adores her husband, happy. I knew she only concealed her
 "tenderness from regard to etiquette. I thought that by exerting
 "her interest in the management of her children, I should give
 "her a true zest for the purest and holiest pleasure, and that she
 "would enjoy the society of clever and distinguished guests, and
 "watch over the progress of her children. At first my plan was
 "most successful, and even the Count seemed pleased to meet
 "with so superior a set of people at his wife's parties; his natural
 "good feelings even seemed to be drawn out, his paternal instincts
 "were awakened, and his affection to the mother of his sweet
 "children kindled thereby; in short, he seemed to assume a new
 "character. One day when he had entered more than usual into
 "some of our family projects I could not resist embracing my
 "friend, and saying, 'Oh, how delightful this is! and how re-
 "joiced I am to see such a happy party.' She coldly disengaged
 "herself, coloured, and said, with bitterness, 'thank you; but I
 "was not aware it was an extraordinary circumstance.' I looked at
 "her, she continued, 'do you imagine, then, that it is to your con-
 "trivance I owe the happiness of the Count making one of our little
 "party; if such were indeed the case there would be more pain than
 "pleasure in the matter. I feel sure of your sympathy and kind-
 "ness, Mina, but in this case it is quite uncalled for.' From that
 "day for a fortnight we were excessively cold, and every attempt
 "at reconciliation only widened the breach. When her husband
 "first paid me attention she seemed not the least jealous, but
 "now she is ever on the watch and observes every mark of con-
 "sideration that he pays me. Sometimes I try to think what
 "ground she has for her conduct. I am sure she hates me, and
 "thinks I am vain of the power I possessed over her husband
 "whereas, if she did but know my heart she would see I was
 "really much more humbled than flattered by his former conduct
 "I have deeply searched into it myself; and though I may perhaps
 "have felt some secret vanity in re-uniting them, I am quite
 "sure that her happiness was the chief object, and my most
 "earnest desire. I loved her sincerely, and still do so, and if she
 "could but look into my inmost soul she would soon see there
 "was no mean wish to triumph, but a pure desire for her happi-
 "ness; but throughly to understand one another one ought really
 "to love as you and I do, my sister, then we can pardon not only
 "each other, but those wrongs which we bring upon ourselves
 "which are the most difficult of all to get over. In childhood

" have played together, had our little quarrels, made them up, played
 " again, and know how to show indulgence to one another. Yes,
 " I must quit her; I feel I must—for even now she all but detests
 " me, and that I could not endure. When I am gone she will
 " perhaps think with regret of her she now repulses. But I must
 " say adieu, and I will write again to-morrow. Lisborne is just
 " returned and has brought with him his relation; a young
 " woman of twenty-six. She is here incognito, and lodges in a
 " back street. She came to see me one day when the family were
 " all at court, and, to tell you the truth, I was not very much
 " pleased with her. Lisborne had talked much of the vivacity of
 " her manners, and her extreme sensibility; but I could not help
 " feeling there was a something repulsive about her. She spoke
 " with enthusiasm of the pleasure of travelling, and told me she
 " intended going to Italy, Switzerland, and passing the winter at
 " Naples. Lisborne immediately gave the most charming des-
 " criptions of these countries, and, for the first time in my life, I
 " really did wish then I was rich. When I returned her visit
 " Lady Gover showed me some lovely sketches of Switzerland
 " and Italy, and I could not help wishing that she would propose
 " to me to travel with her; once or twice she seemed on the very
 " point of it, and I certainly should accept it. I like her much
 " better every time I see her; she is most kind, and shows a sort
 " of trust in me, which I can only account for by the good impres-
 " sion which Lisborne's friendship must have given of me. Though
 " he is always talking of her extreme sensibility and enthusiasm,
 " she has at times a sort of gaiety which surprises me, but I am
 " told that the English always are in extremes, or I should be
 " almost inclined to think at times that she goes beyond bounds.
 " When Lisborne is present it is quite different, for she is not only
 " serious, but even melancholy. I can hardly make out whether
 " it is from a kind of respect towards him, or a natural delicacy
 " which tells her that her own dignity would be compromised if
 " she gave way before him. When we are alone her mirth is so
 " noisy that I never can comprehend how she can really be un-
 " happy or suffering in any way. The Countess' displeasure
 " against me is more and more manifest; even Lisborne has per-
 " ceived it, and spoke of it yesterday in a manner to show me
 " that I was actually detested by her. I tried to make some
 " explanation and excuse, but he said, 'Oh, if you attempt to take
 " that woman and her caprices under your protection I have
 " done. She at least is not so generous towards you, and I really
 " cannot help thinking there is a little affectation, only that I
 " know you are ignorant of all the wrong that she has done you.'
 " I did not choose to ask him for an explanation, but, from what
 " he had said, I could not doubt but that he would advise me to
 " give up my painful position; indeed, I know he does most
 " ardently desire that I should do so, though his delicacy prevents
 " him from actually saying so. I must own, my dear sister, that

" his zealous and constant kindness towards me are very touching;
 " and if he continues to manifest such generous and disinterested
 " conduct I almost feel as if I could wish that other painful im-
 " pressions and feelings could be effaced. Oh, my sister, there are
 " some corners of the heart into which no one, not even a friend
 " like you, can penetrate; moments in which I dare not even
 " fathom my own thoughts, when I long for nothing so much as
 " to flee away and be at rest, escaping from this world and all its
 " cares, and to have done with every earthly conflict. I feel
 " almost worn out with anxiety as to what I ought to do, or which
 " way to turn. Sometimes I feel as if I should bestow my hand
 " on the man who has professed himself so devoted to me, and
 " has shown me such constant kindness, but whose affection, as
 " yet, I do not return; and why should I not? Willingly would
 " I do so if I could; but alas, former impressions are still too
 " strong. When I feel that even his deep attachment cannot win
 " me over I know not how to act; that he is most excellent I am
 " convinced. But one thing is certain, here I cannot stay."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

REAL SORROW.

My wife and I had fully determined never again to fret ourselves
 about possible calamities, but, whenever things looked dark, to
 think of the bright sunshine of the morrow: however rocky the
 road, there was sure to be a pleasant valley on the other side;
 and however sad the trials of this life, to bear constantly in our
 minds that rest which remaineth for the people of God. We had
 been talking much on this subject, and my wife was speaking
 with much feeling of that divine love which is our best support
 and consolation, and recalling the comfort it had given her when
 she had been so afflicted about our dear Charles. From this sub-
 ject we had gone on to the change in Elizabeth's prospects, and
 she said, "We never again shall fear to be distressed by poverty,
 but I must say I do wish now that we had apprenticed Lewis to
 something better than an apothecary; however, if he turns out
 well, it does not much signify." This homely reflection quite
 upset all my high-flown ideas, which had been wandering I know
 not whither, and now stopped short, at the gallipot. I had before
 felt rather annoyed at the idea myself, though I had never ven-
 tured to express it; and it did mortify me sometimes, when I
 thought of my daughter the Baroness, to think of Lewis with his
 pestle and mortar. I was rather piqued that my wife should have
 the courage to utter what I only thought about, so I replied rather
 crossly, "that is not the point; what does it matter if he is a
 good man?" "But what is the point, then?" said my wife in re-

cently; "what should we talk about, if not about our children? nothing else can be of the same interest to us." I felt ashamed of my pettishness, and did not answer. A few moments afterwards a messenger arrived, with a letter from Ludwig. I read it, and sad indeed was the intelligence. "Mina has quitted Madame de Herbourg. The reports are contradictory, so that I cannot judge of them; but it is certain that she is in the hands of a rich, dissipated man—whether willingly or not I cannot say. "I am on her track, and you shall hear as speedily as possible." My wife instantly perceived by my countenance that something was wrong. She turned pale, and gasped out the name of Charles. "It does not regard Charles," said I, "but something very sad. Mina has quitted Madame de Herbourg." "God be praised," said she, "it is the very thing I wished." "Yes, but Triedelben does not know where she is." Augusta seized the letter hastily, perused it, and sunk back in her chair. "I trust," said I, "things are not so bad as these lines seem to import." She looked again at the paper, and slowly articulated, "in the power of a rich, dissipated man—voluntarily!" "Oh, my God!" cried I in agony, "not voluntarily—any thing but this—I can support any thing but this." I had taken back the letter, read it again and again, and at last passionately dashed it on the ground. "Willingly!" cried I again, "that word is not in the letter." "Yes, it is," said Augusta; "but it is not in Mina's heart." "If it was," cried I in a fury, which my wife in vain tried to control, "may the curse of"—"stop! dear Charles stop!" said my wife, in despair, "tempt not the Almighty; utter not any thing so dreadful." "Leave me! leave me!" cried I, trying to burst away from her. "If it is so, nothing, nothing can ever make me amends; neither your love, nor my children's, nor any thing in the world." "Oh, my husband! think of what we were talking of but now, of the goodness of God—the rest that remains for his people—a better world than this." "A better world!" said I. "Foolish woman! she, too, must die! and what hopes has she to look forwards to? Do you not see that it is voluntarily? She has voluntarily become the prey of a rascal, and sold herself to sin. She has brought disgrace and misery upon us." My poor wife till this moment had been vainly endeavouring to calm me, and to pull asunder my hands, which I had convulsively clasped together, but now her arms fell helplessly by her side; she gave a deep sigh, and a look as rigid and fixed as if she were dying; she also leaned against the wall for support. "Oh, my Augusta! what ails you?" said I, in the deepest terror. "You have broken my heart," cried she; "our Mina is for ever lost—you yourself have pronounced her malediction." She could hardly articulate these sad words, and I forgot every thing else but my anxiety for her. "I condemn my poor child!" exclaimed I. "Oh! God forbid! No! no! to Him! to His vast mercy do I commit her! If even

our worst surmises are true, He can grant her repentance. He knows all the artifices the villain employed to beguile her. He must be just such another as that Lovelace, whose history we read; he is like the evil spirit who tempted Eve. Ah! my poor Mina! she was pure and innocent, and she fell; and you, oh, you also! But perhaps, after all, it is not true. Ludwig says, he hopes not voluntarily. And shall a stranger hope, and we, her parents, despair? and form a worse opinion of her than him?" In trying to comfort my wife, I myself got relief. My rage against my child abated, and turned entirely against her seducer. "Rich or not," said I, "I will find some means to punish him; he shall not with impunity invade the asylum of innocence." I snatched up my cane and hat to go out, but my wife, calling me back, told me I should not know where to find him; and also gently reminded me that I had not any money for the journey, and that the villain being rich might easily escape me. "Well, well," said I, "God is great, and He will overtake him." "Perhaps," suggested Augusta, "Elizabeth may know more than we do." I caught at the idea, and, going to my desk, wrote off directly. In return we received that packet of letters which the reader is already in possession of. The last affected me much. We looked at each other after reading it, and hope shone once more through the clouds of darkness.

At last Ludwig arrived; his countenance portended no good. We both at once asked his news. "I have none," said he, "and I know not how to console you; but we will yet get hold of the rascal." "Ah!" said I, "if we could but find Lisborne, he, I am sure, would help us." "Lisborne!" said he; "why he is the villain himself." "Impossible!" cried I; "he is too noble and generous." He looked astounded at me. We showed him Mina's letters; he read them very attentively, and often with a gesture of indignation which terrified us. "The odious wretch!" cried he. "Poor Mina! how little did she suspect him. Surely her two last letters could not be a feint; she could not be acquainted with what I know." "And what do you know? Oh, tell us, I entreat you." "This pretended Lady Gover, instead of being a relation, is a former mistress of Lisborne's, but completely devoted to him. The Countess warned Mina against forming an intimacy with her, but Lisborne, by his influence, poisoned her mind against every thing which she could say to her; and her last letter quite shows this. Oh, the monster! but he shall not escape me. If I catch him, woe betide him!" He then privately told me that the Countess judged very unfavourably of Mina; but I suggested that her letters fully explained the cause of that. She declared that Mina could not help knowing that he was a libertine, for it was notorious. Ludwig had been to the house of the pretended Lady Gover, and there they told him that there could be no doubt on the subject. After another day's consultation Ludwig again returned to prosecute his search, whilst we remained in a

state of the greatest anxiety. Had Mina only intended to accompany her friends on their tour, why did she not tell us, or write to Elizabeth? or why should she secretly quit the Count's house? And yet all her letters were so entirely those of an innocent, ingenuous mind; and yet more and more we lost all confidence; in fact every day we got more and more wretched, and the worst was, that my wife and I constantly quarrelled on the subject, which till now we never had done before. If she inveighed against the poor girl, then I fired up directly; or if I ever said a harsh word, or spoke of her as guilty, then she immediately took her part, and even brought against me the unlucky visit to Uncle Frederic, when she first met with those romances, which I never would condemn with sufficient severity. Alas! it was no longer the disputes which ended in an embrace and redoubled tenderness, but bitter and repeated quarrels and sharp words, which each hour estranged us more and more from one another. At last I said, "Why, my dear Augusta, should we thus render our lives wretched, and almost wish for death, that we may be able to pardon each other? Yes, dear one, if about to bid me an eternal farewell, then would you think of all our love and tenderness for each other." She came up to me, and, sobbing, said, "Is not my heart sufficiently broken, dearest Charles, without bringing before me so dreadful a scene as that? Why, dear one, do you always try to justify Mina, when I reproach her, and turn so harshly against her whenever I try to think better things?" "Oh! my wife, it is because I so dearly love her, because I cannot possibly persuade myself whether she is innocent or guilty; because, alas! sorrow sours every good feeling of our hearts, and renders us both quite unlike ourselves." We embraced each other, and agreed not again to speak on the sad subject; but even this did not bring any mitigation to our pain. When people have been used to live together as we had, without a single thought or feeling concealed, the very constraint we put upon ourselves made us wretched. My wife kept to her resolution not to mention her daughter's name, but her eyes were always filled with tears, and her voice weak and broken; she walked slowly and feebly about, just as she did when we thought Mina dying. She was always pre-occupied and absent, and as it were looking for something that she missed. "What is it, dear one?" I would say. "Oh, nothing," replied she, but still going on in the same way. A little child was one day brought for her advice, who was much disfigured by the small pox; she looked at it steadily, and then bursting into tears, caught up our little Lolotte, whom Elizabeth had sent to amuse her, and said, "Oh! how I wish your pretty face may be thus seamed. Alas! alas! how did the villainy of an unprincipled man mar all our happiness, and little did he care for the wretchedness which he had brought upon us."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

REMEMBRANCE AND REGRET.

For some years after Elizabeth's marriage Jalymann had entirely absented himself from us, but latterly he had occasionally called. After his first excitement, when Mina had discovered him at the gambling table, a sober melancholy seemed to have taken possession of him; he was shy, reserved, and silent; his visits were short, and he had not been near us for some weeks at the time of Mina's flight. When he heard of it he constantly made some excuse for coming to us, though he pretended to be ignorant of the cause of our anxiety; at last one day, when he had sat longer than usual, and for some time without uttering a word, he suddenly, in a way that startled us, asked after Mina. I looked hard at him to discover his object. He held down his eyes, and seemed greatly agitated. "I trust she is well," said I, with a deep sigh. He stood up, and took my hand. "How long is it since you heard from her?" said he, in a low voice. I merely made a slight movement of my head, and did not speak. "Dear Vicar," said he, "I have heard from Berlin." "Oh, my God!" said I, "what have you heard?" He knew it already. "It is, then, true?" said he, in a subdued tone. I made a sign in the affirmative; he sighed deeply, took up his hat, and, then coming up to me, pressed my hand with emotion, and said, "May she be happy! I hear that her husband is immensely rich." Husband!—the word rather reassured me, and I said, "Yes, he is rich." "I am told," said he, "that he is an Englishman of high birth, and very rich. Your daughters, my dear Vicar, have been fortunate; but they well deserve it." These words pierced like daggers to my heart. I called to mind all that my poor child had felt towards this interesting, excellent young man. Ah! thought I, why is she not his wife? Had she remained quietly under her father's roof, it might have been; and now, instead of being a miserable, ruined outcast, she would have been respected and honoured, and residing close to us. It was too much for me, I embraced him, I pressed him to my bosom, and said, with bitter tears, "Oh, my son! if you had but known how truly, how tenderly she was attached to you, none of this would have happened." "Oh, my sweet, my precious Mina!" said he. His look of surprise astonished me, for, from what poor Mina had herself told me, I thought that he had discovered her secret; but when I found it was not so, I was embarrassed and distressed at my imprudence, and was silent. "Did she really care for me?" said he; "did she, indeed? I know she said so, with a noble frankness, when she remonstrated with me on my folly; but I did not believe her; I thought it was only to save me from ruin and the abrupt and hasty manner in which she quitted me, and

her leaving home so immediately, convinced me that my idea was right; but as she confessed the fact to you, I can no longer doubt it. Oh, wretched, foolish man that I am! and oh! how ardently have I wished that it might be so." "Alas! alas!" cried I, "it is now too late! but she was indeed deeply and truly attached to you." "Oh, most unfortunate man!" said he, "and I only know it—to hear of her engagement to another. Is it too late? is she already married?" I was so embarrassed I could not answer him; I stammered, "he is an Englishman—and I should have preferred—Oh! perhaps we shall never, never see her again." Tears choked my utterance—Jalymann pressed my hand, and quitted me. The whole evening afterwards I could think of nothing else, and picture to myself that happiness which was no longer within our grasp. In vain did I that night implore the aid of nature's soft nurse; it could do nothing for the sorrows of a father and mother who wept over the ruin of their child.

The next day Elizabeth arrived, and though I saw the carriage drive in, I could not stir from my chair to welcome her. My poor Augusta was beside me, every now and then heaving a deep-drawn sigh. "Here is Elizabeth," said I. She uttered an exclamation of joyful surprise, but did not move. Sorrow seemed really to have paralysed us. The door was softly opened, and Elizabeth stood before us; her pale and haggard countenance showing the agony she had suffered; we held out our hands towards her without a word, and she fell down on her knees, crying out, "She is innocent—I am convinced of it—it would be too dreadful to think otherwise." I know not why, but these words seemed rather to confirm my worst fears, and I almost screamed out, "Stop, I implore you! do not speak of her; you will drive me mad; I am so almost already." Elizabeth rose up terrified. I fell back in my chair, almost senseless, and for more than an hour we could hardly speak. Elizabeth's sorrow was more gentle and tender than ours, because she could not for a moment entertain the idea of her sister's guilt. When we told her that Ludwig had been unable to discover any trace of her, and that, even if innocent, she was lost to us, she was so affected that she became quite ill, and seeing her so had the effect in some degree of making us more calm. Her imagination dwelt upon every circumstance connected with her sister: "There," said she, "was her seat—here we worked together—here we read—there she embraced my mother." A day or two after Jalymann came. Elizabeth remembered her sister's attachment to him, and they mingled their tears together. By degrees he became acquainted with the sad truth, excepting that he believed she was married, and we did not like to deceive him.

We were one evening sitting together occupied with our sad thoughts, when we saw a peasant, very poorly dressed, cross the court with feeble and staggering steps. I thought she was ill,

and was going to the door to give her something, when she rushed into the room, and fell down at my feet. "Oh! God of mercy! it is Mina! it is our child!" She was so shabby, and looked so wretchedly ill, that at first we did not recognize her. She exclaimed, "Oh, my God! I am dying!" We at once knew her voice, and we all sank down on our knees in prayer. Elizabeth caught her in her arms, and they remained some moments clasped together, till at last they fell at our feet almost without consciousness. After some moments Mina stared wildly round, as if unconscious where she was, then by degrees she recognized us, and held out her hand to each in turn. She appeared almost dead with fatigue, and we conveyed her to her chamber. Elizabeth undressed her and put her to bed, carefully closing the curtains, and seating herself in a chair by her; in a few moments she was sound asleep. Jalymann wished to watch at the door, and he seemed quite beside himself. Neither my wife nor I closed our eyes, and at daybreak we went into the room to look at our child. She was still sleeping, and so sweetly, so tranquilly! We sat down by the bed, and began to talk of all we hoped and feared—Elizabeth still firmly declaring her persuasion of her innocence. At last she woke, and a heavenly expression illumined her countenance. She held out her hand, we took it, and said, "Yes, she is innocent! there is no doubt of it." She looked up astonished, but without any confusion; and Elizabeth said, "I never doubted it." "How," cried Mina, "what do you mean? Do you already know that I have been in the power of a villain? But it is impossible—for I only knew it myself a few days ago." At length we received from her a full explanation. Mina had written fully both to Elizabeth and us, of her departure from Berlin, and of all that had occurred till the moment of her escape, but all her letters had been intercepted; she accordingly commenced her recital from the termination of the last letter we had seen, when Lisborne had persuaded her that the Countess had become her enemy, and she resolved to quit her. Fearing to meet Jalymann at home, she accepted Lady Gover's offer, which, however, was not made till the very evening before her departure, when she requested she might, before finally deciding, write to us for our approval. Lady Gover said it was quite impossible to delay her journey, and Lisborne coming in, they together persuaded her that, under the circumstances of the case, and in order to avoid altercation and unpleasant scenes, she had better take leave of the Countess by letter, and at once accompany Lady Gover. "Your parents," said Lisborne, "can have no objection; you can write and tell them how you are situated, and I will take charge of your letters and forward the answers to you." Mina packed up her things, wrote to Madame de Herbourg and her mother, and gave her letters to Lisborne to send for her, and then quitted Berlin with her friend, supposing they

should proceed at once to Switzerland and thence to Italy, but Lady Gover informed her she had some business which would detain her a few weeks at Hamburg. They went into a small country house just outside the town, which Lady Gover hired, and lived at first very retired. Mina wrote to her sister, much charmed with her situation, and giving her her address. In about a fortnight Lisborne arrived, and seemed rather embarrassed when Mina asked him why he had left Berlin. He hesitated, contradicted himself, and at last declared he had been forced to do so, in consequence of having fought a duel with Count Herbourg on Mina's account. She was greatly distressed and a good deal annoyed by Lady Gover's asking him to remain on at her house, and to accompany them in their journey to Italy. She was also excessively uneasy at hearing nothing from us; and now that she had seen more of Lady Gover, she discovered in her certain principles and traits of character by no means agreeable to her; she repented much of her engagement, but still she had no suspicions with respect to Lisborne, who conducted himself always with the greatest propriety and respect towards her. Several young Englishmen, of his acquaintance and Lady Gover's, frequented the house, and insensibly it became a regular scene of dissipation and amusement; large parties every evening, and dancing and play kept up till all hours of the night, and the tone of the society each day becoming more objectionable. Lisborne was always refined and polite, but more tender in his manner, and once or twice reverted to his attachment. Mina remonstrated with Lady Gover upon the complete change in her habits; she told her she was adopting the English fashion. Lisborne made excuses for her, and said she had so long been the victim of bad spirits that he was delighted to see her recover her former gaiety; though, added he, like all my country women, she goes into extremes. In the simplicity of her heart poor Mina believed him, and said no more. She acknowledged even, with her usual frankness, that the continual whirl of folly had not been without its effect upon her. "In fact," said she, "I stood upon a dizzy precipice; Lisborne was ever at my elbow, and almost imperceptibly assumed a greater degree of familiarity with me."

Amongst the crowd who daily visited them Mina had remarked a young Englishman who appeared not to enter into the general hilarity: she often observed his eyes fixed upon her with a look of curiosity mingled with compassion. One day she was sitting in an arbour, reading a new English romance; the situation of the heroine was very affecting, and Mina's tears showed how interested she was in her fate. The young Englishman came up and asked her what she was reading, she pointed to the book, which was entitled *Seduction*, he took it and saw the passage, "Alas! whither shall I fly?—he has deceived, ruined, and left me." He gave it back to her with an air of compassion, but also of asto

nishment, and said, "And these words call forth your tears?" "Surely," said she, "it is enough to make one weep to think of an innocent, amiable girl falling into the hands of a vile seducer." "Poor girl!" said he, in a low voice, and moving away, then suddenly he returned and said, "Is it not yet too late to save you—are you still innocent? Those tears, are they the bitter drops of repentance, or can it be possible that they are shed by compassionate virtue?" Mina looked at him in terror. "What can you mean?" said she; "in the name of heaven explain yourself." "Nothing," said he, sadly, and placing his finger on the title of the book, "that will be your fate, if it is not so already." Mina turned pale as ashes, but summoned up her courage, and said, "Never! never! I would die first! I do not understand you, sir. I am above suspicion, and I must inform Monsieur Lisborne of your conduct." "Poor girl! go to him, he will tell you it is a calumny, and will still deceive you." "What proofs have I?" "To-morrow, at this hour, if you will return here, I will give you convincing proofs; you may then act as you please; I shall have done my duty." Mina returned to the house, and feigned indisposition to escape coming down stairs. The next day she returned to the arbour, and found the Englishman, who brought with him a letter of Lisborne's, written from Berlin to a friend at Hamburg, giving him a commission to hire the country house for him, and saying he had met a young girl who had completely turned his head, and that he would leave nothing undone to gain possession of her. "I shall have much trouble," said he, "for it is impossible to have more virtue and good sense than she has; but she reposes too much upon her own strength of character; and I have already succeeded in placing her with a lady formerly under my protection, and persuaded her to travel with her. This is a great step with a person of her exalted imagination; and I hope ere long to get her safe into the country house which I wish you to hire for me. I have made my old acquaintance adopt the name of Lady Gover, and call herself my relation. It is with her that this young girl travels. I shall soon join them, and I hope every thing from keeping up a regular course of pleasure and amusement, and paying her unremitted attention. In fact I cannot conceive, unless she is something more than human, that she can escape me." Poor Mina was well acquainted with Lisborne's handwriting, and she could not doubt his perfidy. She saw with horror that, under the appearance of virtue, he had laboured from the very first to effect her ruin. "What a monster!" said she; "I will throw his letter at his feet, and overwhelm him with my contempt, and then I will quit this odious place." "Poor girl!" again said the young man, "are you able to do this? Think of Lisborne's power, of his wealth, of his station here, of all he has expended to bring you here, and judge if he will easily permit you to escape. You are surrounded by spies, and he can easily find the eyes of justice."

Persons approaching prevented his adding more, but Mina had already heard enough to make her hate the sight of the villain. She rushed at once to the garden door, but found it locked, and the gardener under various pretences refused to open it. She was almost distracted, and determined not to rest another day under the roof of such wretches, but she impatiently waited for the shades of night, and as soon as the house was quiet she slipped into the chamber of one of the kitchen maids, who was fast asleep, quickly seized her clothes, leaving her own in the place of them, tremblingly passed out into the garden, got through the hedge on a narrow plank which she found near the paling, and by the light of the stars contrived to make her way towards the south. In her hurry she had left her purse in the pocket of the dress which she took off, and found only a few pence in that of the poor servant. She ran rather than walked whilst her strength lasted; every one she met made her tremble, always dreading that it might prove some emissary of Lisborne's; she dared not enter an inn, and only slept for a few hours under a hay stack, living upon wild berries. As she walked day and night she reached us at the end of five days, but she was almost famished and exhausted by fatigue, and could not have gone on much further without sinking. But now all was forgotten, she was restored to us innocent and safe; we thought no more of the past, but thanked God from the bottom of our hearts for our present happiness.

Ludwig next day came back in great distress at finding no traces of Lisborne. As he came in looking wretched, we called out, "Mina is here! innocent and happy!" He pressed her in his arms, and called her his dear child, made her repeat her history, and listened with great attention. When she had finished her recital he took her aside into another room, and they had a long conversation together. She told us that he had given her a long lecture, and fully shown to her that she had brought many of her troubles upon herself by trying to shine, courting admiration, and going out of her proper sphere. She did not attempt to justify herself, but agreed that the severe lesson she had received might have been needful, and would, she trusted, prove beneficial to her. "I fancied," said she, "that I understood men, and knew the world well; whereas, I was but an inexperienced child. After reading *Clarissa* I thought myself quite above all danger, and yet it did not prevent me from meeting with a *Lovelace*, and nearly becoming his victim."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE SURPRISE.

I now felt pretty certain of Jalymann's attachment to Mina, and of course I had no doubt as to her feelings for him; but Elizabeth entreated me to keep quiet, take no notice, but leave matters to take their own course, which I found some difficulty in complying with. I knew that Mina's abrupt manner of quitting him after the fair, and her subsequent departure from home, had cast some doubt into his mind respecting her real preference for him. He had a sort of confused idea that he had offended her, and that his conduct on that occasion had extinguished her affection. What I had told him in my anxiety of her feelings towards him, had reassured and touched him to the heart; and seeing her again had strongly revived his sentiments towards her. But we had permitted him to imagine that she was married to an Englishman, and the mystery of the whole affair rendered him very sad and uneasy. At last he determined to open his mind to Elizabeth, and confide to her his hopes and fears. She gave him her sister's letters to read, and put him in possession of the whole affair. He wished at once to see Mina, and offer her his hand, but Elizabeth persuaded him that she would probably attribute his offer to compassion more than love, and advised him to continue his visits, and by his continued and quiet attentions do away with any impression of the kind. He accordingly came almost every day; but I thought his manner too quiet, and that of Mina too cold, to satisfy me as to the result; and so, after a while, I could not help making some indirect allusions. Jaly-mann was silent and embarrassed, and Mina coloured exceedingly; so that I began again to hope. Thus autumn and the commencement of winter slipped by till St. Silvester's day. Ludwig and all my children, Wahlen and his, had been staying some days with us, and wanted only Charles to make our happiness complete. I was the last to come down, and as I entered the breakfast-room I found my children and grandchildren round the table, and joy and happiness making a most merry party. Augusta's face beamed with satisfaction, and yet I could see a slight shade of melancholy, which showed me where her thoughts wandered. I looked around upon all the dear party, and said, "Why should we wait till evening? why not at this moment congratulate one another upon our happy and delightful meeting? Mother, look round upon your family, and thank God." I embraced her, and the dear children all pressed round for their turn. Elizabeth had her infant in her arms, and the two elder ones had hold of her dress. It was indeed a touching sight, a spark of celestial joy. A tear dropped from Augusta's eye on the little Charles's face, as she kissed his forehead and blessed him. He was like my son, which made him still more his grandmother's

favourite. Elizabeth was on her knees, embracing by turns all the objects of her affection, and looking at Mina with an expression that seemed to say, May such happiness one day be yours. "May the Almighty," said I, "reserve for us other St. Silvester's days even more happy than this." Augusta directly imagined that I alluded to Charles's return. "May God bless him!" cried she, clasping her hands together, "and bring him back to us." Her petition was echoed by us all, and the feeling of his absence gave a calmness to our joy which in some degree checked any further expression of it. The whole day the same feeling of quiet enjoyment continued, but in the evening we busied ourselves with arranging all our little presents, and every one was more or less in a kind of bustle and excitement about it. My wife put all those which had been given her upon a table together and said, "How curious it is to think how quietly we can contemplate all these pretty things, when formerly a ribbon, or the smallest trifle, was considered a great matter." "Well," said Ludwig, who had also brought his present, "it only proves that you must be poorer than you were. What have all these fine things cost? The trouble of sending a messenger into the town to purchase them. It is certain that you cannot offer each other any thing so really valuable as your love and affection." What he said was quite true. When my poor girls in former days had sat up half the night to work some trifle for us and their brothers and sisters, we had really thought much more of it than of the toys which we now saw spread out before us, each one of which had cost five times as much. We all separated early, fatigued with the excitement of the day. Elizabeth and Mina retired together. I remained up that I might stroll out, according to my custom, to hear the clock strike the knell of the parting year and the ushering in of the new one. My wife, who was seated by me, was talking of Mina, the door stood ajar, and we suddenly beheld Elizabeth and Jalymann, and Mina following with downcast eyes. A secret presentiment made my heart beat, and vividly recalled to my mind the time when Elizabeth had led Jalymann to me, saying, "Bless your children, father; bless the son whom I bring you." She now, however, advanced smiling, and making a sign to the two others to speak, "Dearest father," said she, "they are come to ask your blessing, they have confessed their love for each other." "God bless you, my children," exclaimed I, with heartfelt joy. "Jalymann, I have long loved you as a son." He took Mina's hand, and pressed it to his lips. She was white as marble, and her tears alone seemed to testify that she was conscious. "Mina, dear Mina," said Elizabeth, "are you not happy? Speak, speak! He adores you; he has long loved you." "Oh, do not deceive me," cried she, "it is impossible." "No, no, indeed; it has only been at my earnest entreaty that he has so long delayed his confession, Jalymann, is it not so?"

The poor lad was quite overpowered by *Mina's* doubt of his attachment towards her. He felt, perhaps, that there was a difference in the manner in which he had formerly secured the promise of *Elizabeth*, and that with which he now petitioned for her hand: his feelings were altogether different, less violent and ardent, but more tender and more durable, founded upon friendship, gratitude, and intimate acquaintance, with perfect confidence, and assurance of his love being returned. He turned towards her, and with the undoubted accent of truth, said, "Oh, *Mina*! my fate is in your hands. It is in your power to render me happy or miserable." She was still silent. He caught her hand again, and said, "*Mina*, my beloved! I have long, long loved you"—"But you know," said she—"I know all—I know every thing—I know all your virtue, your worth. Ah! *Mina*, confirm the happiness which your father and sister have permitted me to hope for." *Mina* again repeated, "You know all; I have no more left to tell you."

Elizabeth had extracted from *Jalymann* a promise not to speak to her sister till *St. Silvester's* day. This very intimacy had had an unfortunate effect, as she imagined that he avoided her society, and his promise caused a constraint in his manner, which led to the same conclusion; but that evening, when they had quitted the room together, *Elizabeth* had said, "I have still my Christmas gift for you, dear sister;" and then, making *Jalymann* stand forward from behind the door, she said, "There is my best gift; and you in return will present me with a dear brother." Her little plot did not, however, succeed, for both of the young people were embarrassed and constrained, and did not know what to say. *Elizabeth*, losing all patience, joined their hands together, "you know you love one another." *Mina* jumped up to run out of the room; *Jalymann* was quite dumbfounded; when she herself stood up, and, laughing, said, "those who love me, follow me;" and in this way she brought them into our presence. "Ah! *Mina*," said she, "what a deal of trouble you have given me to make you confess your sentiments, although I knew them so well." "*Elizabeth*," said *Mina*, colouring, "it is necessary to feel quite certain of a reciprocal feeling." "Unjust, unjust, *Mina*," said *Jalymann*, in a tone which carried conviction with it. "I do believe you now," said *Mina*, pressing his hand; and *Elizabeth*, quite beside herself with joy, exclaimed, "I am now perfectly content." The young couple entered into a long explanation, fully understood one another, and the hours passed rapidly and happily away, till the striking of the clock reminded us that we had entered upon the new year. "Ah!" said I, "what a difference in our feelings four years ago, when we thought our *Mina* was dying!" These words seemed to recall with double force to *Jalymann* the generosity of character she had displayed. He felt for her more than he had ever done towards *Elizabeth*.

and the manner in which he told her so quite made her amends for all she had suffered.

At this moment Wahlen came to look for his wife, she pointed out the young couple to him, and I believe no where could there have been a happier party assembled. When I retired to my room millions of stars were shining with the brilliant radiance of a sharp frost; it seemed to me as if they were calling on me to rejoice with thankfulness in my happy old age. Augusta soon joined me, and we together contemplated the glorious sight. "This same sky covers the mild and beautiful country where our Charles is; he perhaps may be at this moment thinking of us;" and she herself seemed as if she was actually in his presence. We then spoke of Mina's marriage, and agreed that it would be best for it to take place immediately. "Every thing that has happened to my two eldest daughters," said she, "is so extraordinary, and so unlike the quiet manner in which I left my father's house, that I am anxious that all these romances should cease. Elizabeth and Mina both ran the greatest risk of being unhappy for life, and if God has graciously prevented it, it is his goodness, in spite of our carelessness." "It is indeed true," said I, "that we should be most grateful to the Almighty; but I do not know what care of ours could have procured for one of our daughters a rich Baron, and for the other a most prosperous farmer; their own hearts chose for them, but it was God's grace which enabled Elizabeth to conduct herself so wisely and prudently in poverty, and which supported Mina through all the sufferings of a secret attachment, in the trials of worldly society and temptation; and also I may add, dear wife, that they owe much to the good principles which we early instilled into them, and the excellent example you always set before them. I now can most gratefully thank God for all the trials and troubles he has sent upon them; they have tended to their good; and even Seneca tells us, 'that those who meet with no troubles, only have seen one side of life.'" "It is quite true," said Augusta; "but suppose we had died before all our troubles came upon us?" "Well, then, we should still have lost much happiness; we should not have had the strong consolations which our experience has conferred upon us, we should not have half known the strong love and affection which all these apparently untoward circumstances brought out, and which, as I before said, have all tended to purify and make us better. We ought, therefore, to look upon them as blessings." "And so I do," said she, "but still I cannot think it can be displeasing to the Almighty that I should always desire to see my children happy, or that I should most ardently pray for the return of Charles." "Certainly not, dearest; and when we rejoice in seeing the good conduct of our children, it is a privilege which we again owe to the goodness of our God, who, whilst he is the Father of all, permits us to feel as parents to our children."

"The more I learn of the world," said she, "the more I tremble at the dangers which are encountered there. Why, even though living in such perfect retirement, some of its storms have reached us; and now Elizabeth must soon enter into it, and what must become of her children? I should like, at any rate, to keep Lolotte with us, for now, that I have gained some experience, I might perhaps save her from the perils of love. I have spoken to Wahlen and Elizabeth, and they have agreed to let me have her, to cheer our solitude." I rejoiced in the arrangement, though I could not help thinking that, at our advanced age, we should be almost less likely to be able to guard her in that respect than we had, when ten or twelve years younger, to save our own daughters from the enemy Augusta so much dreaded.

The wedding was to take place in a fortnight. Ludwig and Elizabeth undertook the trousseau, and made it so magnificent that every chair and table in our largest room was covered with things. My wife seemed to take but little interest in the display, and Mina less. I could not help saying, "I think, my dear wife, that Elizabeth's trousseau, which was procured by Mina's pearls, and cost you so many tears, was more interesting to you than this. Elizabeth received it with the most tender gratitude; Mina scarcely deigns to look at hers. Ah! it is true that pains and trouble do give a zest to life." "But," said she, laughing, "I do not see that there is any want of happiness. My daughters, I am sure, have all they wish for. The only cloud is, that my Charles is in India—perhaps even at this very moment not alive. Now, with all your talk about the benefit of anxiety, do you not think if he were with us our joy would be more perfect?" I could not contradict her, for I felt myself how much I longed to see my boy; but Ludwig still attempted to reason on the subject; Elizabeth joined in, and said, "It appears that all you advance only proves that man really seeks his home in a better world than this. Love, by which I mean all that the word comprises, conjugal, maternal, and filial, is the only real happiness here; and if men were condemned to immortality in this fallen world, the grave would soon become an object of ardent desire."

Immediately after the wedding, when the party were again dispersed, my wife collected every book in which love was at all entered upon, and most carefully locked them up. "I hope," said she, "never again to hear any more of that sort of nonsense. Annette has much more sense in that respect than either of her sisters. She is very nearly eighteen, and I have no fears for her. I shall, however, beg Elizabeth, whenever we go to visit her, not to invite any gay young barons to meet us, for they are sure to turn the heads of young girls." "Wait quietly," said I, "and don't distress yourself about it. Annette, I trust, will be as happy, with her quiet good sense and reason, as her sisters have been in their early attachments. I dare say her settlement is

life will be less exciting, but she will, I trust, escape the anxieties and sorrows which they had to go through."

CHAPTER XL.

NEWS.

After some weeks of perfect repose, we began to look upon all we had suffered as it were a dream. Our family party now only consisted of my wife, Annette, and myself. At eighteen Annette still retained the name of Wise Annette, and my wife always felt sure that we should have nothing of romance with her; and indeed she was altogether so unlike the others, that it did not seem likely. She had neither the refinement and sensibility of Elizabeth, nor the vivacity of Mina. Her great delight was to occupy herself with household affairs; and yet I had once or twice, when I came upon her unawares, found her singing some pretty romances, which Wahlen had given her, instead of the sacred music which her mother wished to confine her to; but I never noticed it, for I knew Augusta would be angry, and perhaps deprive her of her music altogether, and Annette was really a great comfort to us. We heard constantly from Elizabeth, who was perfectly happy, and Mina equally so, and almost daily came to cheer us with the sight of it. She had regained all the gaiety of her childhood, and was the life and spirit of us all. She joked Annette about her sobriety, and her mother about her admiration of her, and said she was sure there would yet be another romance in the family. Augusta scolded, I laughed, and Annette looked still more demure. But though my wife was sometimes vexed, yet if ever Mina remained away for three days she got impatient, and even complained that Madame Jalymann was too much occupied to think about us, and a message was soon concocted to bring her over. But much as we enjoyed her company, we were obliged, ere long, to do without it, for Ludwig procured an agency for Jalymann, which conferred additional dignity upon them, but removed them farther from us. However, she wrote very regularly, and her letters were so cheerful and amusing that they were a constant amusement to us. Even these letters would sometimes touch upon the chord which always afflicted poor Augusta: she would say, "Would that I could hear as frequently from my Charles." Let any one, then, conceive her happiness when, within a few days, she received two letters. They had been brought to me, and I had hardly cast my eye over them when my wife snatched them from me, though the tears which rapidly filled her eyes prevented her being able to read them, and she was obliged at last to get me to do so. As I read an account

of all the dangers he had encountered, she lifted up her trembling hands in prayer to the Almighty. When I had concluded she took the letter, put it in her bosom, read it over and over again, at one moment rejoicing in the happiness of her son, at another imagining all sorts of the most extraordinary dangers, but always coming to me to talk over and sympathise in all her feelings, for the little coolness we had had about Mina had only served to redouble our mutual attachment. I loved her more tenderly than ever, and was most careful to show towards her all the gentleness and consideration in my power.

The next post brought a letter from Ludwig, enclosing one from Captain Elsworth, giving, in full detail, what Charles's modesty had only slightly touched upon. He had applied himself diligently to the study of navigation, and worked with a courage and perseverance quite remarkable. His robust health was most useful to him. When the weather was calm he employed his time in reading and most zealously improving himself, and thus during the long passage he laid in such a stock of information as is seldom acquired. But it appeared as if every calamity possible was to occur during the voyage,—fevers, storms, and at last, in the Indian seas, the ship took fire. All subordination ceased; the most fearful confusion took place; and some of the most terrified amongst the crew launched the boats to abandon the vessel. Charles showed the greatest coolness and presence of mind, stood by his Captain, and his advice tended greatly to the saving of the ship. When he arrived at Bengal he introduced him to the Governor-General, and he had every prospect of making a rapid fortune. "I wish," said my wife, "we only had him safe at home, without his fortune; who knows what accidents may befall him, or at what a dear rate this fortune must be bought?" When I think of the six months' voyage, and the number of dangers he may encounter before I see him again, my heart fails me. Oh, that cruel Skinck! how much he has made us suffer. I wonder whether Charles still thinks of his daughter? Oh! here is something crossed, which I did not perceive. 'Though far away from you all, my heart is still at Elzebach, my thoughts are ever with you; and Oh! how I long again to see those I so dearly love.' I suspect much that Julia is included in that." "I trust not," said I, "for I do not admire the girl. She has never been near us, nor given us any explanation whatever with regard to her attachment to Charles, since we were witnesses of her tender farewell. I quite forgot that after her frank avowal of her feelings I had so abruptly left her, and that when I returned into the room she was gone, the poor child could not have helped supposing we were displeased with her—and the part her father had acted towards our son must, she well knew, have greatly offended us—it was not to be wondered at, therefore, that we should have avoided us. But I suspected that Ludwig, who

was always speaking in praise of her, kept up the communication between the young people; and perhaps I was a little nettled that I had not been made the confidant.

Two years passed away without any material alteration in our quiet enjoyment, undisturbed by any other event than the birth of a new grandchild from one house or the other. Annette the Wise was now twenty—very pretty, very useful, and the pride of her mother, who constantly rejoiced in having kept all romances away from her—when a clergyman of the neighbourhood, a widower of about five-and-thirty, who had a little boy of seven, possessing a very nice property, and very highly esteemed in the neighbourhood, made his proposals to her. We were not aware that they had met above four or five times; but my wife was enchanted that at last a marriage should take place according to the proper forms, and settled in the first instance by the parents; and her delight was increased tenfold by the sedate manner in which Annette received her affianced bridegroom, evincing neither pleasure nor embarrassment, but merely asking a little time to decide. The gentleman paid his formal visits, received her troth in our presence, and behaved quite in the approved style. My wife was more and more charmed, and talked of nothing but the trousseau and the preparations for the wedding. The Wise Annette assisted as quietly as if it had been for a stranger; and never was there a more discreet bride, less taken up with herself or her intended, or more reserved and proper in her demeanour: there were no transports, no pressure of hands, no private conversations, but the most proper and polite attentions. Mr. Balken never seemed to forget any thing that he ought to do; and Annette could never once be accused of absence of mind, continuing all her housekeeping dates with her usual precision and exactness. I was quite unhappy, and thought it perfectly impossible they could care about each other, which I thought far worse than being buried alive. I consequently resolved to speak to Annette, and seized the first favourable opportunity of doing so. "Oh, dear papa," said she, with her gentle smile, "I am perfectly happy, and you know mama is delighted." Well, I had no more to say, but still I should have been better pleased to see a little more excitement.

The wedding day arrived, and the whole family assembled. Every one seemed to me more moved than the bride and bridegroom, who received the nuptial benediction with an air of the most perfect calmness and tranquillity, though they expressed themselves as exceedingly happy. Mina tried in vain to put a little animation into them; they answered all her pleasantries by a quiet smile. Annette, dressed in white with a crown of flowers, really did look very interesting, and every body admired her, though her husband made no reply to the observations and compliments which were paid him, except by a polite bow. Mina :

last got quite angry, and, taking him by the hand, said, "Why do you not say something? Is she not lovely?" He assented so coldly, that she was vexed and Elizabeth sad; and indeed we were so disturbed that I never saw a more dull wedding supper; we all yawned before it was half over. My wife alone was satisfied, and maintained it was the correct thing, and that the bridegroom had made many pretty compliments to her about the supper. Elizabeth and Mina retired with their sister, and remained a long while with her, and when they again joined us I observed that they both had some difficulty in concealing a smile.

The following day, after the young couple had taken leave of us, to go to their own home, Augusta began to express her approbation of the manner in which Annette had comported herself throughout, and took the opportunity of giving a little sermon to her other daughters, and especially to Mina, on the dangerous effects of romance reading. Mina then drew a large packet of letters from her pocket, which she said had been lent to her, and telling her mother they were the most approved style of love letters, asked if she should read them. She accordingly commenced, and without giving the names, read on till her mother stopped her. The expressions were so vivid that they were, so to speak, almost fit to burn the paper. She considered them quite improper, and compared them with what her Annette would have written—who would not even have received such if they had been sent to her. Elizabeth laughed, and made a sign to Minette, who handed one letter to me and another to her mama, who instantly put on a grave and annoyed look. I confess I could not help laughing, for these very letters were from Mr. Balken to Annette, and evidently showed that her own must have been quite as affectionate. We found out that they had met long before we had any acquaintance with him—that they had been engaged for a considerable time—but that Annette, knowing all our anxieties, had resolved not to marry for some time, and that she had determined afterwards to play upon her mother's little foible in order to divert her attention from thinking too much about Charles. Seeing her sisters really distressed at her apparent coldness, she had let them know that she and her husband perfectly understood one another, and begged them to tell us, and ask her dear mother's pardon in favour of her notions. "So you see, dearest mama," said Mina, "we cannot always judge from appearances, for love may take the mask of indifference: however, you have the happiness of seeing us all happy, and what can you desire more?" My wife was too kind not to smile, though she was rather put out at the trick played upon her, and she cast a look at Lolotte, who was playing in the corner with her doll, with a full determination most carefully to watch over her. I have already shown how far this was successful, and it was to Annette's son-in-law, to whom she gave the favorite and adopted

name of Charles, that Lolotte sent all my writing paper. The new marriage still added to our family comfort, and we had the additional delight of anticipating Charles's return.

We were startled one morning by a loud knock at the door, and hearing the Agent, Skinck, announced. I could not help shuddering at the sight of him. My wife stood up, and hardly even returned his salutation, except by a very cold and slight bow, sitting down again immediately to her work. I offered him a chair; he commenced the conversation by offering me a field which I had long desired for the improvement of my glebe. I could not thank him, but in a dry, stiff manner said I would think about it, although the advantage to me was as clear as the day; but I more than half determined to refuse it, that I might be under no obligation to a man who had done us so much injury. "You have no great need to enlarge your fields now," said he, in a humble and conciliatory tone, "but your successors, no doubt, will be glad of it." "True," said I, dryly, "and on that understanding I do not object to it, as it will be for their advantage." Skinck looked down confused, tried to engage my wife's attention, but she would not look at him; nor would I either give him the least encouragement. After an awkward silence he began to notice Lolotte, saying she was a lovely child, and the very image of the Baroness, asking most warmly after all the family of the baroness, the young barons, &c. &c. My wife only answered by monosyllables; she really seemed to have lost all maternal vanity; but when, a few moments after, he said, "you are indeed a happy mother, Madame Bemrode, and much to be envied," he seemed to have quite forgotten all about Charles—not so my wife—she replied, without looking at him, "And is it he who has deprived me of my eldest and best beloved son, who speaks to me of happiness? My tears have never ceased to flow since you got him torn from his mother's arms." "Me!" cried he; "Oh! you do not mean"—"I do mean that you are the cause of it," said she, "that you denounced him as an ill-conducted young man—he whose conduct was always irreproachable—he might still have been spared to us—but you took care to prevent it, and got him sent off to the farthest extremity of the world. We were then poor and unprotected, and our excellent son was sacrificed to your vengeance; but my tears and my sighs were all seen by the Almighty, and he will avenge me, be assured, Mr. Skinck." I could not help feeling that my dear wife was now rather carried away by her sense of the injuries done her, and when I heard her threatening the divine vengeance in so strong a manner, I felt horrified, and considered it was an unchristian feeling; I therefore gently remonstrated with her, and said, "No doubt, my dear, your maternal love has received a severe shock, but the mercy of God is always open to the repentant sinner." Skinck gladly turned towards me, and seemed greatly relieved that I had

thus spoken to my wife. He said, with a very humble and subdued tone, "If even I am as much to blame in the business as you think me, still I do trust it has all turned out for the best, for I am given to understand, sir, that your son is already making an immense fortune." "What does that matter," said Augusta, with renewed warmth, "if he has had to purchase it by such dangers as he has gone through, and which perhaps even now he has sunk under? He could not come to us, however much we might wish for him. I would rather have him with us, in the greatest poverty, for without him every thing is a blank to me." "But," said I, "think of all the golden opinions he has obtained from every one. Our love for him would, no doubt, have always been the same, but we should not have been as proud of him if his fine qualities had not been called forth by the trying circumstances in which he was placed; notwithstanding, sir," said I, "I must tell you that your conduct was equally criminal and unjust, when, by your calumnies, you got him taken away from us; but I pray God to forgive you." "And will not you also?" said he, with a tone and manner of deep contrition. "Time has changed me much—I would not act so now. Say that you forgive me!" He really did seem truly grieved and repentant, and I held out my hand to him. Augusta still looked away, and did not speak. I felt sure that had she seen his countenance she also would have been touched. "I do pardon you," said I, "and will try to forget." "And you also, dear Madam, will not you extend your forgiveness?" "Yes, as a christian," said she; "but I cannot pretend to forget till I see my son restored to me, for he is exposed to dangers of every kind." Skinck sighed deeply, took up his hat and cane, and rose to depart. "I had wished," said he, hesitating, "to have brought before you a subject of the deepest importance to me, but I will not intrude it now." My wife looked up, and perceiving for the first time his haggard and humble look, she was moved. "Is it a request?" said she kindly: "can we be useful? we shall be very happy." "Ah!" said he, with a deep-drawn sigh, "it is in your power to render me a most essential service. I feel that I am quite unworthy to ask it, but my poor daughter, my good and innocent Juliet, would be the sufferer if——He then detailed to us at length, without sparing either himself or his wife, that their luxury and extravagance had completely ruined them; he had been going on for some time considerably beyond his means, and had been afraid to retrench for fear of alarming his creditors, and especially Count Rangard, his landlord. "I might," said he, "still retrieve every thing, by getting rid of all my useless establishment, if the Count would give me time; but he has unfortunately got wind of my difficulties, and he requires a fine of 5000 crowns for renewing my lease. I have no means whatever of raising this sum, and if I am turned out I am completely ruined. I know I have deserved

this affliction, and for myself I could bear it, but my poor child—so excellent, so amiable! Ah! sir, you are a father, and you can feel for me.” His voice trembled and his eyes filled with tears. My wife brushed away those which fell from her eyes, and said, “Mr. Skinck, how can we help you?” “The young Count Rangard is the most intimate friend of the young Baron de Wahlen; he can do any thing with his father, and if Monsieur de Wahlen would but ask him”——“I will write to my daughter directly,” said I, cheerfully, “and ask it as a favour to myself.” “Will you! will you indeed?” cried he, in a tone of joyful surprise; “then what I have heard cannot be true.” “What have you heard?” “That Monsieur Jalymann has applied for, or rather that the Count has offered him, the farm.” “My wife and I looked at each other, not knowing what to reply; we just remembered that Mina had written the day before to tell us that an unlooked for circumstance would soon bring them quite close to us, and to settle them for life. At the time we could not guess what she meant, but it now struck us as a flash of lightning. I accordingly, after a moment’s hesitation, frankly said, “Perhaps the rumour may be true; and indeed I believe it is so.” I then told him the substance of Mina’s letter; he heard me with the most evident distress. “Of course I retract my request,” said he; “nothing can come in competition with the interests of your children, or the happiness of having them so close to you. It would be absurd folly in me to think more of it.” He caught my hand convulsively: “Adieu, Vicar! I am a ruined, miserable man, but I richly deserve it.” He cast his eyes upwards, and added, “I tried to crush your son,—it is by your daughter that I am destroyed. Ah! Madam, you were right—the justice of the Almighty has found me out.” “God preserve me from triumphing over you, sir,” said Augusta, kindly taking his hand: “think not of the words which a mother’s grief drew forth; I unsay them from the bottom of my heart. You are unhappy—permit us to be your friends—what is it possible to do? Are you quite certain that your affairs would come round if you retain your situation?” “I really believe it; the farm is most advantageous; all my silly and foolish expenses have ceased; my daughter is a most superior manager and housekeeper; and, though no longer rich, I shall still be above want.” Augusta and I again looked at each other, and we perfectly understood each other; we wept and embraced. “Shall we not?” said I. “Certainly, certainly,” cried she. “Though it would be delightful indeed,” said I, “to have our Mina so close to us.” “We could not enjoy it, nor have a moment’s repose,” added she, “in a house from which we should feel that we had expelled an unhappy family.” “And besides,” said I, “we can constantly go and see them in their present farm,” “and they can come to us as often as they like,” said my wife. Whilst this rapid dialogue was going on Skinck’s face gra-

dually brightened up. My wife turned to him and said, "No, sir, our daughter shall not turn you from your house and home: she and her husband, you may rely on it, are not aware of the circumstances; they think you are quitting Eizebach voluntarily, and I will write and undeceive them." The hat and cane dropped from Skinck's hands, his whole form trembled, he seized my wife's hand, and pressing it to his lips, said, "Blessed angels! how could I so misunderstand you! how could I treat you as I have done! and now that it is in your power to avenge yourselves, you behave to me thus! But will you always think as you do now? will you not some day regret this noble sacrifice? Ah! think well of it!"—"What!" said I, "regret that which has conferred such happiness upon us? Never! And is it not a pleasure to feel that so near a neighbour will now be our attached friend? and I am sure that henceforth we shall be so." He took my hand, and said, "For ever! for ever! respected pastor." But he seemed to fear that it might be too late, and that Jalymann's bargain might be concluded.

Just at that moment Mina and Jalymann, who wished to take us by surprise, entered the apartment. They coldly saluted Skinck. He looked sadly at them, and got up to go. I stopped him, and said, "Sir, it is in misfortune that we must prove friendship, and I will undertake that my children will be your friends." "Oh," said he, "I feel it is impossible." "No! misfortune has sacred rights," said I. "We have all of us known what it is to be unhappy; remain with us, I will explain matters to my children, and you will find that they agree with us." I then asked Jalymann if he thought he had any chance of obtaining the farm and agency of Eizebach. "I am certain of it," replied he, joyfully: "Count Rangard wrote to tell me that Mr. Skinck had given it up, and offered it me on the same terms, which I have of course accepted." I then set before my children the miserable condition of the unfortunate Agent, his hopes and his fears, as succinctly and coldly as possible, in order that the generosity which I felt sure they would evince might shine forth the brighter, as I was convinced they would at once consent to the arrangement; but my vanity was rather at fault, for both Mina and Jalymann contented themselves with simply saying that they were sorry for Mr. Skinck's misfortunes. Ah! why is it that we always require to have the feelings and imagination worked upon before we can bring ourselves to perform a good action? How very seldom do we see pure and unmixed motives in any act of kindness, but interest or self-love in some way or another steps in with its icy breath, to check the generous impulse. How seldom do we remember that men are our brothers, and that the more unhappy they are the more we should consider them as such. "Dear Mina," said I, reproachfully, acting upon these thoughts, "I wish you had a better memory." "I regret that I

have so good a one, my father,"—whispered she, with a look at the Agent—"my poor brother." "The poor and the unfortunate," said I, "should be more than brothers. We have ourselves known both poverty and sorrow; and I do assure you, my children, that every time I set foot in the castle all my thoughts would revert to the unfortunates who were turned out to make way for you." Mina coloured. "Father," said she, "you are better than we; happy will it be when we can feel as you do, and follow your example." Then turning to Jalymann, she said, "Dear husband, it would be no pleasure to me to inherit this castle, if my father only visits it with regret; I had rather remain in our own pretty house, where he comes with pleasure." She then addressed Skinck, saying, "Remain on, sir, in your old home, it is our mutual request; and it will ever be a pleasure to me to visit my dear friend Juliet." Jalymann also spoke kindly to him, and said he had imagined that he quitted the farm at his own desire. The poor man's voice was so choked by his emotion, that he could only stammer out his grateful acknowledgments. He clasped his hands together, evidently in prayer, wept, and pressed our hands. "Oh! how lovely is virtue," said he, at length, "and how have I abused it! How vainly have I sought for happiness in other things! But I must go and communicate your noble conduct to my family." He went to the door, but returned in a moment, and said, "Would you complete my happiness by coming with me and repeating your promise in their presence?" We did so. As he entered he cried out, "We are saved, and I can remain." Madame Skinck rose and gave us a cool reception, but Juliet's joy was unbounded at seeing us, although as yet ignorant of her father's immense obligations towards us. She handed us chairs, and testified great delight at seeing Mina. "My wife and my daughter," said Skinck, "never can you feel half gratitude enough to our admirable and excellent neighbours." He then told them every thing. Madame Skinck appeared more humbled than really touched; and, as if to diminish the weight of the obligation, began talking of all the money they had laid out upon the farm—that in fact it was not so very desirable after all—but that custom had rendered it—"Tell the truth," said Skinck; "you know we should be beggars if turned out. Yes, excellent Vicar, I will hide nothing from you; and I wish Mr. Jalymann to see the depth of distress from which his kind consideration has saved us." He then took down his books, and requested Jalymann to come with him and examine them. Madame Skinck shed tears of mortification, but Juliet's conduct was admirable, for, whilst she testified the deepest gratitude to us, she contrived to throw a veil over her mother's ill conduct, and even to humour her wounded self-love. "Dear mama," said she, "your anxieties are now ended, we can remain in our home, and our kind friends will often visit us. You dared not hope for thi

happy result this morning, though I told you I felt sure of it. You know you said, none but angels could act in that manner. I felt they were angels, and I was not deceived."

Jalymann and Skinck soon after came back, and the former said cheerfully, "I feel sure that, with economy, Mr. Skinck's affairs will quite come round." Skinck took Juliet by the hand, and leading her up to me, said, "She loves your son. To my eternal confusion I tell you, sir, alas! she has now no fortune; but still she is worthy to become one day his wife, if God permits his return, and he does still love her." Juliet blushed, and to hide her embarrassment embraced my wife, who warmly returned it, and, in spite of all her rigid notions on the subject, said, "Do not blush, my child! Charles well deserves your attachment, and you may fully rely upon his. He will return as devoted to you as ever." "Oh! ho!" said Mina, laughing, "I see in our family the sons have the privilege of loving." Augusta smiled, loaded Juliet with caresses, and joy and cordiality reigned throughout the party. The Agent declared that never in the midst of all his false grandeur had he known what it was to enjoy so much happiness; and even Madame Skinck became friendly; and Juliet proposed that we should all dine together. We agreed, and a plain, frugal repast, the first of the kind that strangers had ever partaken of, was served up, and partaken of with the zest that friendship alone can give. I even remarked that our host and hostess really did possess more amiable qualities than we had imagined, and I frankly told Juliet so, saying, "Till this moment I always imagined your parents cared for nothing but wealth and show." "And they," said she, ingenuously, "fancied you were always envying them; and that now you were vain of your new connexions. But I knew better, however much it might have appeared so." She then told me several little circumstances which gave colour to the notion, and I could not help feeling that in some of them there was even more than the appearance; and I felt it was a useful lesson, to show that one may be unjust without intending it, or even being aware of it. On the following Sunday I took for my text, "Save me, O Lord, from my secret sins;" and as I prepared and sounded my heart, I found a thousand occasions in which I certainly had sought to mortify Monsieur Skinck.

CHAPTER XLI.

FILIAL DEVOTION.

The heart of man is a strange compound; and did we carefully search out all the motives of our love and hatred, we should generally find a sad mixture of self at the bottom. From the time I

had forgiven Skinck his injuries towards us, and that I had prevailed on my children not to take his farm, the proceeding seemed so generous and so lovely, and I was so exceedingly satisfied with myself for it, that I felt a kind of gratitude to him for having procured me such sweet satisfaction, and I now could not make enough of him and his family. I left Wahlen no peace till he wrote to Count Rangard: he consented to allow Skinck to retain his farm, but demanded securities and the payment of all his arrears. I sounded Ludwig to see if he would assist him, but at first he would not understand me, and when I more fully explained myself he positively refused, asking me if I should have made this request, knowing the state of his affairs, before my sudden affection for Skinck; I frankly said, I should not. "Well, then," said he, "I don't know what right you have to expect that I am to pay for the pleasure you have had in forgiving Mr. Skinck." Grieved to see him so harsh, I turned to my sons-in-law who, to oblige me, were willing to advance what they could spare, but it was not near enough to be of any real use to my friend. He had been refused by all his wife's relations, who, since the change in his establishment and mode of life, had almost cut his acquaintance. There was only one whom he had not applied to, who had the character of being a rich old miser, but all intercourse with him had long ceased; for he would not put up with either the impertinence or the luxury of his niece. One day when I was pressing Ludwig he asked me why they did not apply to this man, saying, "I dare say he is better than they give him credit for, and it is, at any rate, worth trying." Skinck, who had no other resource, wrote to him, and, contrary to his expectations, the old gentleman returned for answer that he would come himself and see what could be done. A few days after, when we were assembled at the castle, we saw a shabby, rattle-trap sort of a vehicle drive up, drawn by cart-horses and driven by a common labourer. Madam Skinck said, "See how little he cares about disgracing us with his meanness." Skinck sighed, and looked as if he wished that something of the same economy had prevented the necessity of his asking assistance from him. He was ushered in, and his countenance was so kind that I felt I could give him all my confidence at once. "Well, niece," said he on entering, "for some things misfortune is useful; you can receive me now, I perceive. But come, tell us what you want." "Dear uncle," said she, "a series of unfortunate events has ruined us." "Oh! yes, I perceive," said he, casting his eyes round upon the magnificent furniture, "these, I suppose, are the unfortunate things." He then came up to me as an old acquaintance, and taking my hand, said, "I am glad, sir, to see a man of your character here." Juliet was engaged down stairs, but she was sent for, and with much grace she saluted her uncle. Her dress was plain and neat, and he regarded her with pleasure, saying, "I am glad, my dear, to have

heard a good account of you; I like you, and will prove it to you." "Oh! thank you, thank you," said she, "you will then aid my parents." "Yes," said he, "I intend it, but my rule is, to do nothing without return, and therefore you must do something for me." "Ask what you will," said she, gaily. "I take you at your word then," said he, laughing, "but I shall not require anything very terrible. Come, Mr. Skinck, show me your books." We got up to go, but he stopped us, saying, "Friends are never in the way." Skinck, also, begged us to remain; and he said, "Well, I am glad to find you are not ashamed to confess your follies before these good people; it is a good sign." The books were produced; Skinck put forth his case with much anxiety, but perfect openness. His debts were considerable, more so than we had any idea of. The old man was quite startled: "Now," said he, "suppose you had suddenly died, what would have become of the poor creatures to whom you owe all this money? they would have been ruined; and all for what? to pass in the world and amongst those to whom you have given your sumptuous entertainments, as the rich Mr. Skinck. Did your conscience never reproach you? what does God tell you of your conduct?" Poor Skinck, pale and self-convicted, had not a word to say; at last he stammered out, "Juliet will tell you no poor person would have suffered, for I had provided against that." "How so?" "The money to meet these bills was in my daughter's hands." "Stuff and nonsense," said the old man, frowning, "you would soon have got the money from her again when you wanted it." "No, no, indeed; I have long been in want, but I have never touched this deposit." "Fetch the money, my girl," said the old man. She coloured crimson, and saying that, as she was afraid her dear father might have wished to apply it to other purposes, she had already paid the bills, and now drew forth her receipts. "How long has this happened?" said the old man, with a scrutinizing look. "Last week, dear father, just when you gave up all hope." "You did right, my child," said Skinck, "I thank you." After the examination of the accounts was finished, the old man paced up and down the room, saying, "It is too much, I never can pay it." I tried to soften him, but he replied, "No, it is too much; I might give a portion, but that, I know, would be useless." Juliet burst into tears, and drew towards him. "Don't cry, child, don't cry, or you will make me cry too, but you may make all right if you choose." "Oh! tell me, tell me," said she, "I will do anything, however dreadful." "Well, what I require has nothing very dreadful in it. Listen, child: the son of my best friend saw you when you were at school, he fell in love with you; he and his father have always been trying to make me obtain you in marriage, but you know I had then no acquaintance with you. A poor old miser like me, with a threadbare coat and rattle-trapriage, could not expect to be noticed. But, however, the young

man is an excellent fellow, and very highly thought of; but he had nothing, neither fortune nor profession, so I told him he had no right to declare his love, and the good lad obeyed me, and kept it to himself; but now, by his own merit, he has got into an excellent position, and has, with more confidence, repeated his admiration of you, and again begged me to assist him; so I will give you a fortune of 20,000 crowns whenever you become his wife. Your father's debts will take 10,000, but marry my friend and I will settle them, and give you a handsome wedding present besides." We were panic struck. Juliet was ready to faint, but she said, "Dear uncle, my hand is promised, my heart is not my own, it belongs to the son of the excellent vicar." "Well, I am sorry for it, but it cannot be helped; I wish I had said nothing about it; but where is your betrothed?" "He is," said my wife and I together—"He is," said Madame Skinck, hastily, "in India; he has nothing yet to offer, and there is nothing really fixed about the marriage." "How, what do you mean?" said the old man, taking a chair. I prevented Madame Skinck from answering by telling him, in the most touching manner, of the engagement of the young people, but he only shook his head, and coldly said, "Oh! this is nothing but the folly of children, what does that signify? I dare say your son may be a very fine young fellow, but he cannot have my niece; don't look angry with me. No doubt love has claims, but duty has much stronger ones." "Sir," said Skinck, with noble firmness, "I have many wrongs to atone for to Mr. Bemrode," and he frankly recounted all the evil he had been guilty of. "You acted very badly," said the old man, "you should have sent him home to his father, and not out to India; but child," said he, "I am neither a misanthrope nor a barbarian, I love young people, I feel pity for Juliet, and I wish it could have been otherwise, and that my young friend had either never met her or had forgotten her; but I promised him 20,000 crowns, and I cannot break my word; with this fortune he will, no doubt, get another wife, whom he may think as pretty as you, but then I cannot possibly help your father; think well of it, my dear. If love appears to you the one great object of life, still bear in mind, that however sublime it may appear, it is often very deceitful." "Fidelity, at any rate, is approved by God," said Juliet. "Oh! certainly; but, still, filial love is a paramount duty, one that never ought to change, beginning with our birth and continuing till death; the first and purest of all sentiments, and the only one which ought never to flag. But you act as you like, I will not constrain you. Suppose, now, you were to hear of your lover's death,"—Juliet and Augusta both gave an involuntary scream,—"or suppose he changed his mind; however, you must keep your promise, if you consider it so, even though your father is ruined. I look upon these matters as mere childish folly; and even if young Bemrode did entertain for you the most high-flown

sentiments, after all he could not love you like your father, who for twenty years has watched over you with tender solicitude, even before you were yourself able to know anything about it. What has your lover ever done for you? or what can even a husband do, in comparison with what a parent does? But I will say no more, it is for you to choose." We all remained silent. Skinck cast anxious glances at his daughter; his wife threw out a hundred hints to us to take our leave; my wife could not restrain her tears, and I went to look for my hat, Juliet stopped me, and said, "Surely you will not abandon me; my Charles is your Charles, he is your son." "Yes," said I, "he is, the son in whom I glory." Augusta could only press the sobbing girl to her bosom, and could but articulate, "Be faithful to him."

When we reached home we began fully to appreciate the full value of Juliet. Had she for ever remained portionless, we should have preferred her to any other. Augusta felt furious against the old man, I tried to defend him; she said, "Well, let me at least complain of our unhappy fate, for Charles will never come back if he hears that Juliet has married another, and how are we to help it? I do not even know whether I should wish her to persist in her refusal, for if she would not sacrifice herself for her father's sake, I should hardly desire her as a daughter-in-law; and yet, if she saves him, it is the death blow to Charles's hopes." "Let us not despair," cried I, "I am sure Wahlen and Jalymann will do all they can for Charles, and Ludwig, with whom he is such a favourite, cannot refuse to do something." He soon joined us, and my first words to him were, "Dear friend, the happiness of our excellent Charles is at stake; surely it is worth some money." "Undoubtedly," cried he. I told him the state of the case, he seemed lost in reflection, and I again began to hope, but he suddenly cried out, "Suppose Charles should have forgotten her." "Forgotten her," cried I, "impossible!" "And why not? they have not met for two or three years, and who knows what that may have effected, or how long he may yet be absent? and, surely, for such uncertain contingencies, you would not interfere with Juliet's real duty." "Well, well," said Augusta, "I see how it is; you love Charles but you are not his father; I am so convinced of his constancy that if I had millions, instead of 10,000 crowns, which is all that is wanted, I would give them at once." He smiled, but made no answer. Next day he took me aside, represented to me the uncertainty of events, the changeableness of young people, and ended by making me resolve to keep quiet. I told my wife all he said, but she would not listen; the very supposition of Charles's death or inconstancy rendered her furious. At last Juliet arrived, and her looks showed us we had no good news to expect. She told us that her uncle, notwithstanding his kind manner, would not relent, and that he had declared her his final determination to do nothing for her father, but

on his own conditions. I said nothing, but my wife burst out in invectives against misers. Ludwig reasoned with her, and in so forcible a manner that he convinced me that he was right. Juliet took out the last letter she had received from Charles, and, half choked by her tears, read it to us: he promised eternal constancy to her, and entreated the same from her as the only happiness of his life. "Ah!" said my wife, "if any one could read that letter unmoved, they must have a heart of stone." Ludwig coldly said, that Jalymann had quite forgotten Elizabeth. Juliet sighed, and I caught her in my arms, and with the fervour of youth declared that she should be my daughter. I wrote immediately to Wahlen and Jalymann, and entreated them to do all they could for poor Charles, and, feeling certain of success, I went to the castle to let them know what I had done. I there found matters had assumed another tone; Skinck was beginning to hesitate; his wife coldly told me, that Juliet's being the heiress of her uncle entirely depended on her marrying to please him; and, that she was sure we had too much real affection for her to interfere with her happiness. Skinck, himself, was not quite so ungrateful. "I should care little for her inheritance," said he, "if I could but make up the necessary money, for all we may have shall be hers, and I would infinitely rather she married our friend's son than any one else, however rich they might be; for I know that economy and order are far better than any wealth." Juliet asked, in a melancholy tone, when I could get answers to my letters, and we parted very sad. I soon heard from Wahlen; Elizabeth sent me her jewels and every valuable that she had; but alas! her husband was totally unable to help us, for he was dependant on his uncles, and his letter plainly showed how grieved he was. Jalymann sent even more than I had dared to count upon; but alas! it fell far short of what we required; we had, therefore, to take the sad intelligence to Juliet, that Charles had nothing to hope but from her constancy. "What ought I to do?" said she, in despair. I could only answer by a sigh. I returned home, oppressed with grief at the sight of her tears, and with something more than anger at the looks of her mother.

A few days after Skinck came to request us to come to his daughter, as she desired to see us. "Dear friend," said he, on the road, "do not forget that you are a father, and that you speak to our child." I knew what he meant, and I followed in silence. Juliet came out to meet us, and said, "Dear parents of him I love, I have sent for you to decide my fate; I cannot, no, I cannot," said she, pressing her hand tightly upon her heart. "Oh! this heart is his, and nothing but your order can take it from him; my father does not exact it, but his sadness, his supplicating looks! Whatever I do I am wretched; take from me, at least, the torment of pronouncing my own misery; you must decide for me what I ought to do." I did not know what to say

The weather was dark and stormy,—I went to the window and looked out into the country. I could almost fancy I saw my poor Charles in the distance, returning to find all his hopes crushed, and his Juliet the wife of another. I pictured him to myself imploring me to preserve her to him. I looked up at the sky, and at that moment the clouds dispersed and the sun shone forth resplendent. Ah! thought I, when will the rays of eternal joy disperse the clouds of this short and miserable life! No, my son, I feel that I have no right to absolve a child from her most sacred duties, to procure you a few years of happiness in this transitory life. Be unhappy, if it is your lot, but the day will come when the bright, pure sunshine of eternity will pierce through the obscurity of the dark present. I turned round and saw the face of the innocent victim pale as death, but I had made up my mind, and said, "My daughter Elizabeth loved, with all her heart and soul, an estimable young man, I asked her to give her hand to another, for our sakes she consented; and she has often told me since, that the happiest moment of her life was that in which she conceived she had sacrificed everything for us." I was silent, but Juliet looked fixedly at me, and I said, "My child, I have decided." She cast herself at her father's feet, and said, "Father, there is my hand, it is done." None of us dared speak a word, or interrupt this triumph of filial love. Skineck did not even dare to meet her eyes, but he raised his to heaven, as if sustaining a violent contest with his feelings; he took her hand, and said, "You, my child, are fulfilling your duty; you are happy.—I alone am miserable." He raised her up, and, without embracing her, approached the old man, and said, "Now, sir, I do fully feel the whole extent of my guilt in having so wastefully expended that fortune which should have been that angel's, and prevented her from marrying the man she loved. Juliet, my child, be it as it may, you shall be happy,—I will not accept your sacrifice. Poor let us be! I shall, at least, preserve you, and not have caused the misery of your life, and that of the young man whom my cruelty drove from you; but he will return one day to wipe away your tears." The poor girl and her father tenderly embraced one another, and their feelings every moment became more pure, noble, and affectionate; they each seemed as if their only happiness consisted in giving up all for each other, but Juliet was victorious. Her mother then embraced her with transport, and said, "My child, you have restored me to life." I had stolen up to the old man, and asked him if he could witness such a scene unmoved. "It moves me more than you think for," said he, "my heart is filled with admiration, compassion, and pleasure; but they are happy because they obey the dictates of conscience, and if your son was here he would have little generosity if he was not capable of the grandeur of soul displayed by Juliet."

I were not already compromised I would hesitate." I could

say no more. Juliet went out and brought me back a large packet of my son's letters; her hand trembled, and I took them from her as one receives the last adieux of a dying person. "Now," said she, in a stifled voice, to the old uncle, "I am ready to obey you, sir." He nodded assent, and left the room. I saw him striding up and down the garden in a thoughtful, melancholy manner; I hoped that he was going to change his determination, but, after one or two turns, he came back laughing. Juliet was absent; he congratulated her parents on her obedience, entertained them with his plans for the marriage, and all the wedding presents he meant to give the bride. I thought him quite brutish and unfeeling for speaking in this way before us, and, turning to my wife, who was perfectly crushed and had not opened her mouth, I prepared to return home. As we walked together, I said to her, "Well, dear, sad as it was angels might have contemplated the scene with pleasure, and Charles, I am sure, would have said so." Poor thing! she only answered me with a sigh.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE LAST DAY OF THE CENTURY.

I wrote the last chapter to the sound of cannon, all the bells around ringing merrily, accompanied by the acclamations of the people. It was the last day of the century. Wahlen had invited us to celebrate the day, and it was at his town house that we had assembled. All my dear children and grandchildren were present,—it was eleven o'clock at night, they had gone out to see the illuminations, and a spectacle in the public market-place. I was old, and afraid of a crowd, and therefore I preferred remaining alone. The chamber in which I was was illuminated, as well as the house opposite and the whole street. As I looked at the rapidly-passing crowds I was touched with the thought that not one of those who were now rejoicing would ever again see that day. I saw, in idea, all those people, with their joyous looks, enclosed in the dark tomb, long before two-thirds of the new century should elapse. When the jubilee returned all their eyes would be closed, their voices silent, their hearts cold and lifeless, their animated bodies reduced to dust. Mine, my children's, my grandchildren's even. My heart was heavy—death had never seemed so fully realized to me. At any anniversary, either of one's birth or the new year, we perhaps say, we may meet again this time next year; but at the jubilee of the century it is almost impossible not to think of the shortness of life. If even by some extraordinary chance one of a thousand had been alive in the jubilee of the last century, he could have known nothing abo

it, for it must have been in the first stage of infancy, and now in the foggy atmosphere of extreme old age. A century is too long a space for one who aspires to eternity. Every burst of merriment, every exclamation of joy that reached me, pierced my heart. "Alas!" said I, "if this day does not remind man of his fragile tenure, what else will?" At last the noise became quite insupportable. The bright lights gave me a sort of shudder—they gave me the idea of funeral lamps, and that I was a shadow in the midst of an ocean of light. "Wretched mortals!" cried I, "in a few moments, or days at the most, all that now delights you will have vanished away! all the ties that bind you to life will be severed!" I was terrified at the sound of my voice, and the sentiments I had uttered, which seemed as it were inspired by the Almighty. I got still more nervous, and called in an old, deaf servant, who alone remained in the house, to sit by me. I could hardly make her hear; but when she did come, by dint of bawling, I asked her for a candle, and not one of those used for the illumination. She only caught the last word and said, "Ah! if we could but see another, how happy we should be!" At last I made her understand, and she brought me a miserable little lamp, with scarcely a drop of oil left in it. I took it, and retired into a back room, where I could see and hear nothing, but all was quite dark. I found myself the better for the quiet, and with my head resting on my hands I continued my reflections on the rapid flight of time.

Suddenly, a general discharge of cannon, and the rapid chiming of the bells, with trumpets and cymbals, almost deafened me. It was midnight; the last hour of the century had expired, and the new one was beginning. I fancied the world in ruins, and imagined the last awful trumpet and the general assemblage of all people and nations. My own little lamp was just expiring, and its melancholy glimmer was quite in unison with my feelings. "Ah!" said I to myself, "it is a picture of what we all are—casting around us a dim and uncertain light—appearing but for a little while in the sphere of action—and then vanishing away." I thought over the past, and putting my hand upon my journal. I said, "There is the record of all the numerous blessings which have marked my progress, and yet, ungrateful that I am, how often do I complain?" I had been reading some of it to my children, who had listened with great pleasure to its various details; and Ludwig had predicted that I should still have many interesting facts to note down for the next two or three years. I thought, however, it was nearly time to bring it to a conclusion. and I accordingly took up my pen, intending to do so, whilst the last echo of the bells and firing was succeeded by one grand Te Deum, in which millions of voices joined in with fervour. The heart-soothing strains restored all my equanimity; my sad thoughts vanished away like a thick cloud dispersed by the soft

winds of the south ; I felt that I could heartily join the crowds, and shout happiness to the new century. Ah, yes, peace and happiness to the rising generation, and to those who are to take our place. I have since had many sweet and precious moments to be thankful for. But I must now return to the wedding of Juliet.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE FOURTH WEDDING, AND CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK.

Madame Skinck's old uncle, proud and delighted at having gained his point, had gone to announce his success to his young friend, and promised to give us due notice of his return with the bridegroom. Poor Juliet dreaded it much, and made it a condition that every thing should be settled for her, and that she might not be required either to write to or receive letters from her betrothed until she became his wife. "I will scrupulously fulfil my duty," said she ; "I have given up every letter that I received from Charles, and will never again receive a line from him ; but to correspond with another is beyond my power. I can be silent, and strive to school my heart to forgetfulness ; but I cannot lie, or deceive." Her uncle promised all she required ; and some delays arising, it was three months before he returned : he came alone. Some important affairs of business detained the bridegroom, but he was to join them immediately, and the wedding day was fixed. Juliet entreated me to marry her, and I could not refuse, though my heart was torn with grief. I seldom went to the castle, the poor girl's paleness and wretchedness were too painful to me. The day before the wedding another letter came to say the bridegroom could not arrive till the ensuing morning, at the hour appointed. Juliet was rejoiced at the reprieve, and said, "When once I have uttered the solemn vows, to love and obey, God, I am sure, will give me strength to keep them, and to conceal all that it costs me."

Next day after dinner I went to the castle, but could not persuade Augusta to accompany me, though she was invited ; she could not bring herself to witness that which would cause so much misery to her son. Juliet had on her bridal dress and crown of flowers, and behaved herself beautifully. Her parents looked quite happy. The old uncle had presented her in the morning with 10,000 crowns, and she had immediately given them to her father, and at that moment she felt a sweet satisfaction. Suddenly the Agent, who was standing by the window, cried out, "They are coming !" I looked out, and saw three carriages approaching ; I concluded, of course, that they were the relatives. The young man first descended, and he appeared young and of handsome figure ; but I could not see his face, :

his back was towards us, whilst he handed out an aged lady, as it seemed to me, but I could not quite tell, for poor Juliet trembling like an aspen leaf, took my hand, and said, "Dear father, pray for me, and support me." The uncle was smiling with secret satisfaction, but gravely seated himself in an arm chair. The door opened, and—Oh! my God! my gracious God!—what did I see? The young man—the husband—was—my Charles. He entered, threw himself into my arms, and at Juliet's feet, crying, "Oh! my father! Oh! my beloved one!" His mother, sisters, and brothers-in-law, were all assembled; the boys also; and Augusta, in torrents of joyful tears, embraced first one Charles, then the other, and then her Juliet. Ludwig also embraced me with the vivacity of youth, and I guessed at once that it was he who had arranged the whole affair, which he confessed had cost him immense pain and trouble, but that he was determined fully to prove the excellency of Charles's bride, and to show how completely she was worthy of him. I shook my head and said, "Ah! when will you leave off your proofs and your trials? Is the pleasure you have given and received worth all the torment you have made us suffer?" "Surely," said he, "both your pleasure and mine is doubled: as for me the sight of so much virtue and a heart capable of such noble sacrifice is the most exquisite pleasure I can conceive." We then asked for a full explanation, and heard that Charles was a Lieutenant, had come home upon leave, with an ample fortune; that Ludwig had calculated the time of his arrival—had made him promise not to let us know it, declaring that he would undertake to present his Juliet to him, on the moment of his arrival; but, wishing to have the gratification of his trial, and proof of her virtue, he had concocted his plan with the old uncle, who had taken a great fancy to his little niece, and willingly became a partner in his schemes.

Our happiness was now unbounded, we could not express it, and I shall not attempt it. May my readers be able to enter into it. After the nuptial benediction Ludwig said to Charles, "Now, my boy, you may put off your uniform, and turn your sword into a plough-share. I trust you will permit me to end my days with you."

Yes; we were then perfectly happy and grateful, and we are so still. I will not give the reader any further details. Our days passed tranquilly and peacefully by,—we have passed our old age in the bosom of our dear children. I have been reading to them the conclusion of my book. Charles and Juliet thought I did not dwell sufficiently upon their happy fate, and especially their wedding day; "but," said she, "every succeeding one has been still happier; and especially that on which I presented to you, dear father, my little Charles."

I was about to look up my manuscript, with a determination to continue it, when Lolotte said, "Oh, dear grandfather.

you must put down that I am now two years older than when you began to write; and that neither you or my grandmother now find fault with me for using your writing paper." "Well, Lolotte," said I, "I will; and I will also add, that what could not possibly have taken place during the last century, may, perhaps, take place this, provided that your cousin continues as promising, and applies himself well to his studies." "Oh! I will answer for that," said she, clapping her hands; "and I am sure he loves me, even better than all those you have spoken of in your book." "May God bless you, and make you as happy as all of us, my Lolotte, and grant to every young girl the pure and noble attachment of an upright and honest man, to whom she may prove a virtuous, loving, and tender spouse."

FINIS.

